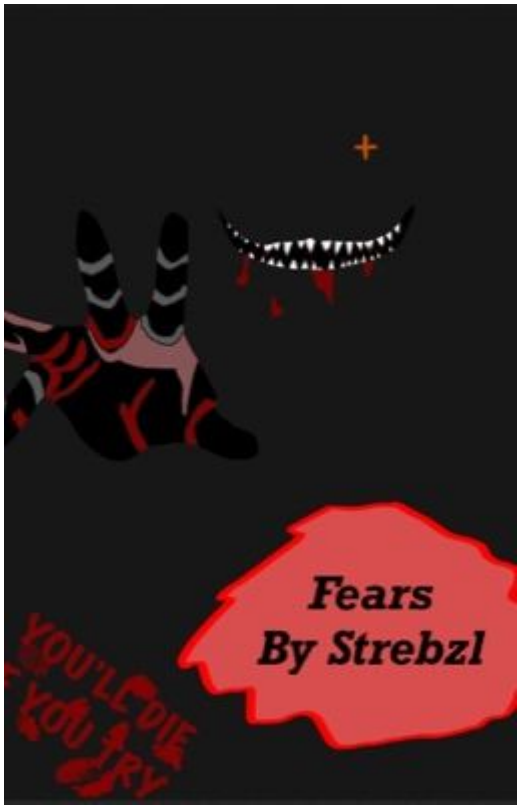
Fears
By Strebzl

Prologue

The history of the city of Goiky is long and complicated, reaching back thousands of years to the earliest indigenous beings ever known. Suffice it to say that this is as ordinary as any other town, having a city hall, many eating establishments, a supermarket, housing units, and so much in between. The city houses a friendly community where the surrounding earth is mildly hot and the glistening moonlight reflects off the vast open areas. Welcome to Goiky.

Within the heart of this unorthodox town, where communities gather and the peaceful commotion of the citizens can be heard, a prophecy had been awakened long ago. A prophecy housing a dark, diabolical curse that would latch itself onto anyone oblivious enough to anger the evils that stealthily controlled the heart of the city.

In this world of fantasy, where the extraordinary was the norm and the impossible was just a challenge waiting to be conquered, the stage was set for an epic adventure that would transcend the boundaries of imagination. A world of marvels and perils awaited those unlucky enough who dared to step into the unknown, where the realms of the possible and impossible converged in a symphony of enchantment and wonder.

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Soo heh. I did my best to write an actual prologue for my first-ever causal work. Hope ya like it!

In this story, I'm aiming to publish a chapter about every three days, just an fyi hehe.

Chapter 1: Publishing 10/16/23

Chapter 1

Tree felt uneasy. He didn't know why. Life has always been the same. His life in Goiky wasn't always easy, but he couldn't really complain or say much. His best friend and roommate, Pen, made the hard days worth it and they had come a long way. They were now going to graduate High School in a few days. Tree was uncertain that he and his best friend achieved such a milestone in life, but he worried about what challenges would fall upon him later.

Tree gazed into the mirror as he got ready for the first day of the week. He dried his oak face with a towel. He made sure to brush and trim his leaves extra today. He scowled as he glanced at his own reflection, dissatisfied with his look today. Everything was fine. Why was he so unsatisfied today? He was about to have one of the best and most memorable days of his life in only mere days. With a pant, he tossed his damp towel onto the shower curtain and headed into the living room of his house.

Pen was sitting on the couch, watching his favorite sports team, the Goiky Golden Knights. Tree chuckled at Pen's interest in television, as he didn't understand anything about sports. It seemed Pen had already gotten ready for the day ahead. His blue cap was elegantly glimmering in the daylight, and he was wearing a pair of ripped jeans and an oversized hoodie. He was completely ready to go.

"Hello Pen!" Tree gleefully greeted.

"Shh! The Knights are about to score! I can't miss this!" Pen quietly replied with a finger over his mouth.

Tree rolled his eyes playfully before going into the kitchen to make himself some breakfast, as Pen had already eaten a couple of hours prior. He whipped himself up some quick pancakes. He guzzled them down quickly, as he and Pen were going to be late for their school's graduation party if they didn't get their act together. Tree remarked,

"You know, we're going to be late for the party if we don't hurry."

Pen pouted over his shoulder. "Aw, man! Just a little longer? The game is almost over, promise!"

"No Pen, quit your shenanigans, you can pre-record the game some other time. Come on, let's go." Tree asserted.

"Alright, fine! I bet we're going to be early as heck like the last time we went out!" Pen blurted with a slight frown.

Tree found one of Pen's socks on the ground. He took it and hucked it straight at Pen's face. The sock bounced off his forehead with a "Squeak."

"Hey! Rude!" Pen barked as it bounced off his head.

Tree snickered.

They were about to enter Tree's car when Tree noticed his electric car hadn't been charged. Tree was steaming mad. They were already running late, and now they don't even have a car to transport them. Tree squeezed his fists in anger, as the duo had no other choice but to walk to the party.

They ended up being 10 minutes late for the first day of graduation, and Tree couldn't help but grimace at the sight of his enemy, Fanny. She was casually chatting with her best friend, Bubble, next to the entrance of the building where the graduation party was being hosted. He was amazed that the floor didn't suddenly start cracking under the girth of the popular girl. He joked with Pen about it, which Pen instantly chuckled at.

"Oh, look who decided to finally show up! Imagine being late for the graduation party!" Fanny mocked surprised. Bubble laughed along with her statement.

Pen shrunk, "It isn't Tree's fault! I-"

"It was my fault," Tree cut in. "My alarm ended up not going off."

"Hah! You're so stupid tree! What kind of brainless thing doesn't

double-check something like that on a day as important as this." Fanny blurted.

"Don't talk to my friend like that! Cool your blades walking air conditioner!" Pen stated with an assertive tone while jumping between Tree and Fanny.

"You're sticking up for this loser? Well, I guess that makes you just as dumb as him! C'mon Bubs! Let's leave these two idiots be, I'm losing brain cells just being around them."

Fanny and Bubble soon walked away from the scene. Tree was pissed. He could hear the two women gossiping about him and pen, saying vile things about the two of them.

"Why does Fanny hate you so much?" Pen hesitantly asked.

"Isn't it rather obvious? She has a searing hate for everyone." Tree snidely replied. "Her anger is unmatched for the most part after all."

Pen and Tree continued into the large auditorium where the graduation was being hosted. In the building, they met some of their friends, Pie, Pillow, and Bottle. Although they, alongside their friends, were considered "losers" at their school, they all got along well and had been friends since kindergarten. Once Pen and Tree saw their friends, they went over to sit with them, as it had been an entire weekend since they'd seen them.

"Hey guys! Come sit here. There are conveniently two free seats here!" Bottle excitedly greeted.

It had been obvious that she'd been heavily preparing for the party as she sported a white, square-neck dress that seemed to fit her perfectly. She was primarily known as the energetic friend of the bunch, always lifting others' spirits with her unmatched charm and cheerful demeanor. The other two friends solemnly waved at Tree and Pen. It was clear that they'd also prepared for the party. Pie and Pillow both mirrored each other's outfits, sporting blue floral dresses. Pillow even brought a designer bag, which seemed to have cost a fortune to afford. The friends sat down and talked for a while during the party, with some people commenting that Pen's outfit was too

"casual." Pie and Pillow seemed to be more energetic today too. Tree figured it was because they were hanging out with Bottle, whose energy was extremely contagious. Overall, the five friends had a blast at the party. Life was great at the moment.

Once the party ended, the majority of the friends were super tired from the party, except Pie. Pie offered to give the friends a ride home, which they quickly accepted. They all hopped into Pie's SUV and went on the road.

"Pie, how was the party girl?" Bottle exclaimed with excitement.

"Heh. It was pretty cool for the most part." Pie reluctantly stated.

Pie was the calmest and the most responsible of the group today. The whole party, she never drank or ate anything, as she told everyone she wasn't feeling it. She spent most of the party talking to Pillow about boys and whatnot.

As of then, it was 11 PM, and the friends saw the electrifying lights of Goiky slowly going off and the night sky glistening from the stars. With their spirits high, they all concluded the day as successful. However, it wasn't until it was too late that Pie noticed her tank was almost out of gas. She ended up running out not too long after noticing, and the friends were stranded next to the highway. It didn't make it much easier that they were all exhausted from the party.

Luckily, Pie had her cell phone on hand, but to her dismay, her phone was out of battery, and none of the other friends had theirs on hand. They were stranded. The friends fell into a state of panic as there was a high chance no one would be coming to help them, as the road itself was stranded too, with no other cars or people in sight.

"Are we going to be okay?" Bottle whimpered, looking like she was about to cry.

Pillow sat beside her and comforted her telling her they'll all be okay in the end and that someone would eventually find them. Meanwhile, Pie was figuring out what the group would do in a situation like this. Tree and Pen attempted to call for help but to no luck.

After what felt like hours, the friends decided to give up and sleep on the side of the road. They decided that Pie would stay up since she's a night owl and try to get them rescued. Pie reluctantly agreed to this.

Pie herself was getting extremely drowsy despite being used to pulling all-nighters here and there. She dazed off to sleep, thinking what she would do alongside her friends in the morning. She was starving and dehydrated at this point. "Is this really happening right now? Am I actually stranded? Gosh dammit, I knew I should've charged my damn cell phone," Pie thought.

Not long after becoming drowsy, she heard a familiar voice.

"What are you guys doing out here? It's 1:30 in the morning!"

Pie slowly rose from the freezing ground to see some of her friends, Remote and Liy.

"Why are you guys not home yet at this time?" Pie questioned.

"We were hanging out with some friends, why?" Liy exclaimed. "We should be asking you that too."

"Well, my friends and I got stranded and none of us have a working cell phone," Pie explained.

"If you're stranded, we can take you guys home and call someone to tow your car," Remote offered.

"That would be perfect. Thank you guys so much for helping us. We all thought help would never come." Pie happily yapped in an excited tone.

Pie woke the others up and told them that her friends would drive them home. They were ecstatic to hear the good news. They quickly got their belongings from Pie's car and hopped into Remote and Liy's car. Sure it wasn't an SUV, but at least they had an automobile to drive them home safely. While the friends were packing, Liy called a towing company to take care of Pie's car.

Everyone was silent in the car until Remote offered that the friends could stay at her house since it was already late and she didn't feel

like driving all around Goiky. The friends had almost no choice but to agree. It was blindingly dark out and they only had one major source of light, the car's headlamps.

The group arrived at Remote's house and they slowly walked inside. They didn't expect Remote to have such an enormous and beautiful house. It looked like a millionaire's mansion on the inside and all of them were thrilled that this was where they would sleep that night. Everyone was so tired that they didn't even try to find a nice place to sleep. The friends flopped onto the warm carpet and lay there for the night. They made it home safely against all odds.

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Yeah soo, I may have lied about the original publish date. I was just too excited and motivated to work on this story!

Chapter 2: Publishing 10/17/23

Chapter 2 - Tree

My memory of last night was rather vague, as all I could remember was going to a party and passing out at some random location.

"What the hell happened?" I quietly thought to myself.

I soon got my answers, as I heard Pen wish me a good morning. I slowly opened my eyes to see all of my friends sleeping around me and next to the front door of a random house I'd never seen before. I slowly got up to examine the house a bit on my own while my friends were still dazed from the night before. That's when I felt a sharp pain in my right foot. I saw that I had rolled my ankle on someone's flashlight, and the broken glass cut my ankle up pretty badly.

"Who in their right mind would randomly pack a flashlight?" I thought to myself as I didn't think much of it.

I winced in pain, but that sudden noise was enough to wake the others. They all got up and stared at me. That's when I realized Pen was staring at my foot. His eyes widened and he solemnly stated, "Tree, your foot's bleeding dude."

At this point, I noticed that my ankle was completely swollen and red. I glanced down and saw that my ankle bone was sticking out through my skin and blood was gushing out of my foot by the second. Panicked, I tried to walk over to what I thought was the kitchen. Every step ached more and more, as my bone was exposed to the air. Here, all my friends had noticed and were rushing to my aid. Pen dialed 911 while Pie, being the badass she was, took me to the ground so I wasn't standing on my throbbing foot. Remote and Liy opened their upstairs doors and paced down the steps. It turned out they had rooms of their own and slept there for the night. Remote grabbed some paper towels from the kitchen and dried the fresh blood off my foot, while Liy frantically searched the living room cabinets for any bandages or any first aid material. She had no luck

in doing so. The others just stood around me trying to help. I saw that there was a large stain of blood on the house's carpet. Gosh, I felt so bad for the house owner who probably had to clean it up after everyone left. We stay for only one night and something like this happens.

It wasn't long until paramedics arrived on the scene. They had to take out a stretcher just because I messed up my ankle. Right when the paramedics put me on the stretcher, I knew I wouldn't remember much from there besides passing out, probably from the amount of blood I lost that day.

I woke up in the emergency room and a doctor walked into the room I was staying in to supervise me and inform me of the details of what was happening just in case I didn't know. When I saw the doctor, I thought I might've been hallucinating. I couldn't describe the doctor. They briefly introduced themselves shortly after entering the room.

"Hello, I'm Dr. Black Hole. I will be taking x-rays of your injury and running some diagnostics while we wait for the surgeons to arrive." The doctor said with a deadpan tone.

It was now that I noticed I had a tightly wrapped temporary bandage around my right foot. Dr. Black Hole set up the X-rays and got to work. It impressed me that the doctor could do all this without hands, as he held the equipment and took notes with a pencil using nothing but sheer gravitational pull force. I was just thankful that he was super efficient and precise with every move he made. While the black hole was taking X-rays, for some reason, I started to unexpectedly blush and my cheeks became warm.

"Tree! What are you doing? Are you seriously showing signs of love at a doctor's office? Snap out of it!"

I just couldn't help it, It was love at first sight. Although I tried to control myself, I couldn't stop blushing. I think the doctor noticed, but he didn't say anything. He just carried on with the tests and X-rays.

Moments later, the doctor came back with the results.

"I have some good news and some not-so-good news. Which would you like to hear first?" He asked politely.

"Umm, just tell me the bad news first, then the good news," I replied with a soft smile.

"Okay, the bad news is that your ankle is severely sprained and may take up to two weeks to heal. Alongside this, your bleeding requires multiple stitches to patch. For this, it's best if we put you on some crutches and a cast. However, it's only an ankle sprain and doesn't need any extensive treatment, meaning you don't have to get any surgeries or go through extra tests." He explained.

He showed me the x-ray of my sprained foot. At first glance, it didn't seem bad, but the doctor pointed out that there was a large dislocation on the lower part of my ankle. The doctor helped me out of the hospital bed and asked if the crutches felt okay. I could feel my cheeks heat when he helped me. Jeez, I was embarrassed. He then asked if I was okay since he noticed my crimson face.

"IT'S NOTHING!!" I quickly replied.

He shrugged it off and led me out the front door. I saw my friends waiting for me there with worried expressions. Pen instantly went up to me and hugged me as soon as I stepped foot outside the door. I thanked the doctor for the extensive work he did to diagnose and provide me with proper treatment.

"Tree! I missed you so much! I thought you would come out in a wheelchair and stuff." Pen remarked.

"Thanks, Pen, and to all you guys for visiting me!" I was pretty happy my friends cared so much about me.

"Why wouldn't we come? Idiot." Pen replied with a smug. He gave me a noogie and messed my leaves up a little bit.

"Hey! Lay off, dude!" I laughed.

My friends helped my helpless self into the car and Pillow took her Lamborghini to the hospital for some reason.

"Hey Tree, I always remembered your dream car to ride in was a Lambo!" Pillow excitedly yapped.

I was so thrilled. I looked at her and asked how she afforded it. She explained that her dad owned a chunk of the most successful company in Goiky and she cared for me and my well-being. We all got in the car and my friends let me ride shotgun.

"Woah! This car is amazing! How much was it?" Liy asked with an enthusiastic expression.

"If I were to tell you, you would pass out and we'd have to make a U-turn and go back to the ER," Pillow replied with a smirk.

Everyone chuckled at this and my friends soon dropped Pen and me off at our house. Pen, being the good friend he was, carried me inside with one arm and lifted my crutches over his head with the other. I knew he worked out multiple times a week, but I never anticipated that he would be able to do something like that.

Inside the house, Pen set me on the couch and put my crutches on the ground. He asked if I needed anything, to which I told him I didn't need anything. He then left the room with a suspicious expression on his face. I didn't think much of it since I figured he was going to his bedroom to play video games on his PC. Meanwhile, I texted some friends on my phone and played some games.

Moments later, I heard some footsteps behind me. I looked around and didn't see anything. However, I didn't let my guard down since I thought Pen was trying to prank me. I was vigilant for ten minutes straight until I brushed off the sounds as something else and went back to texting friends on my phone. Just as I checked my inbox, I heard a demonic yell come from behind me. I turned around and saw a clown staring directly at me. I screamed at the top of my lungs and my voice cracked. That's when the clown unmasked itself. It was Pen. I should've known he would do something like this from the beginning. Pen started laughing super hard and even started choking on his saliva.

"I got you so good! You should've seen the look on your face! You got so scared hahaha!" Pen eagerly laughed.

"Pen! You know I'm scared of clowns! Don't do that!"

"Yeah, but it was still funny as hell!" Pen continued laughing and teasing me. He was probably doing this because he knew I couldn't do anything to fight him, as I didn't have my crutches. If I wasn't in crutches, I would've beaten the snot out of him.

The past few days have been some of the wildest days of my life. I had gotten stranded on the highway and broken my ankle for the first time in my life in the past two days. What's next? Is someone deciding to bomb the graduation party next Friday?

That night, I decided that walking to my bed was too much work and later decided to sleep on the couch. However, Pen had other plans. He carried me over his shoulder to my bed and laid me down. He got me some water and tucked me in. I felt embarrassed that I was being treated like a kid at his disposal. At the same time, I was rather happy knowing how much my best friend cared about me.

"Goodnight Tree!" Pen whispered in my ear as he got up to leave.

"Goodnight Pen," I replied.

"Remember, if you need anything in the middle of the night, call me over, I'll be there."

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Hii! Thank you so much for making it to the end of this chapter! I greatly appreciate anyone who views this story. It makes my day to see that people are reading my work :)

Chapter 3: Publishing 10/20/23

Chapter 3 - Pen

After tucking Tree into bed and caring for him, I sat down at my computer to play some of my favorite video games, Call of Duty and Warzone. I booted up my PC and started playing. Although my arm slightly ached from carrying Tree over my shoulder the day before, I still played a couple of games of Warzone and a bit of Call of Duty. I played until it was about two in the morning. I'm used to pulling all-nighters every now and then, but tonight, I seemed a bit more tired than usual, probably due to the fact that I didn't drink any energy drinks beforehand. I decided to call it a day on gaming after about an hour and went to bed for the night.

"Is Tree going to be okay?" I questioned myself before hazily falling asleep. I figured that Tree would be just fine, considering the quality treatment he got at the doctor's office yesterday.

I woke up to the sound of rattling outside my room.

"That's weird... Tree is usually a heavy sleeper. He never gets up at this time," I pondered.

I creaked open the door to see Tree standing outside my door with his basket of laundry. It stretched at least four feet high with clothes alone.

"Hey peasant, I request some adequate service. Please do my laundry," Tree said in an elegant voice. He didn't bring his crutches over since he could walk just fine without them.

"Yes, Your Majesty." I played along, slightly sighing since I was rather groggy this morning. Since it was five in the morning, I only got two hours of sleep last night.

I carried the laundry bin down the stairs and stuffed the clothes inside the washer. I bet Tree was going to take advantage of his

broken ankle since I used to boss him around all the time when I got a sports injury. After stuffing the laundry inside the washer, I carried my laundry bin down the stairs, which had about an eighth of the clothing that Tree's laundry bin had. It was the morning and I already wanted to go back to sleep.

After doing the laundry, I heard a glass shatter downstairs. I thought the worst had happened and Tree somehow got injured. I sprinted down the stairs, landing with a face plant at the bottom of the stairs. I brushed it off, got up, and kept running. I came into the kitchen to see Tree sitting patiently at the dining room table. He had a faint smirk on his face as he saw me.

"Oh, dear! It seems I dropped my cup of water on the floor. I request you to clean it up and pour me a new one." Tree snidely exclaimed.

I sarcastically stared at Tree with a slight frown.

"Yes Master Tree," I spoke with a hint of sarcasm. This guy was already getting on my nerves despite it being only two hours into the day.

I wiped the spilled water up with my tank top since the towels were getting washed along with our clothes. While I was wiping the spilled liquid, I saw Tree silently giggling at the sight of me doing all his work. I then got a cup and poured him some more water. He thanked me with an elegant smile. This is going to be a long day.

Roughly five minutes after I gave Tree his water, I heard Tree call for me. I was about to load into another Warzone game so I canceled the queue and left my room.

"What do you want?" I rudely stated.

"I have another task for you." Tree called.

At this point, I was getting a little angry. Tree was using me for everything today. I moped down the stairs and saw Tree holding his breakfast. He made some waffles and a smoothie.

"I request you feed me my food while I watch the news." Tree started not long before laughing maniacally.

"Okay, you've crossed the line bro. Under no circumstance am I feeding you your breakfast like a baby!" I snapped. I was pretty angry by now considering the fact Tree interrupted my gaming session.

Tree then did something I had never imagined. He whipped out his phone and showed me an embarrassing picture of me from a few weeks ago. In the picture, I was doing push-ups shirtless on my bed. It was so embarrassing to see that photo considering I was in nothing but boxers.

"I'll send this picture to all of our friends if you don't do as I say, Pen." Tree boasted. "On top of all that, I can tell our friends that you neglected an injured person."

I let out a loud sigh. I had no other choice but to obey Tree's absurd commands.

"FINE!" I shouted. My face is boiling with anger. Not only was I angry at Tree for making me do everything for him, but also because he had an embarrassing picture of me I never knew about. I proceeded to feed him for the next 15 minutes while he watched the television. The nerve of some people these days.

The rest of the day went like this. Whenever Tree had any minor inconvenience, he called me over and ordered me to do whatever he wanted. I told him the night before that if he needed me, I'd understand and be there, but what he was doing was too much. Part of me believed that Tree was torturing me like this to get payback for either me scaring him yesterday, or the fact I do this to him whenever I get injured playing sports. Whatever his ulterior motives were, he definitely used this as the perfect opportunity to get back at me.

That night, Tree toned down the amount of orders by quite a bit. It seemed as if he was getting tired of calling me over and that he wasn't getting as much fun out of it as before. Thank god. Tree and I were going to go over to Pillow's house the very next day to hang out. I could tell Tree was thrilled by the surprise outing. I prepared Tree his favorite food, salmon teriyaki. I thoroughly enjoyed cooking ever since I was in 5th grade. My dream was to either become a professional athlete or a famous chef. I cooked the salmon with

perfection and when Tree took a bite of my creation, I could see his eyes instantly light up. He ate all the food faster than a starving lion. Although I prepared a full meal for Tree, I decided to eat lightly tonight. I whipped up a quick sandwich for myself and proceeded to finish it on the couch with Tree. Although Tree was a nuisance sometimes, I could tell he truly cared about me and valued my presence in his life. We both sat on the couch and watched some movies for a couple of hours straight until we decided to go to bed that night.

Moments later, I got a text from Pillow. It turns out there was a change of plans for our hangout. Since her dad got a huge raise at work, he told Pillow she could take her friends on a vacation.

Pillow: Yeah so my dad decided I could take you guys on a vacation. Where are you guys thinking?

Bottle: We should definitely go to New Orleans. It's close by and the weather there is extremely nice.

Pillow added Remote and Liy to the chat.

Remote: I'm down. Liy and I are available for a couple of days before graduation.

Pie: How long will the trip be?

Pillow: Nothing much, let's say 3 days since it's so close to our neighborhood.

Pie: Deal. I'll make it.

Pen: Yup, Tree and I are definitely going. Can't wait to prank Tree at the beach again lololol

Bottle: I've gotta see this.

Pillow: Great! Let's meet at my house at 11:00 am, sounds good?

Pen, Pie, Bottle, Liy, and Remote reacted with "👍"

I put my phone away before helping Tree up the stairs by carrying

him on my shoulders. He didn't weigh as much as 2 days ago, considering he had less of an appetite and lost weight because of his injury.

Tree and I got ready for bed and being the good friend I am, I made his bed and did all the dishes, even though doing the dishes was his job before.

Tonight, I decided to lay off staying up late because I had to wake up early to go to Pillow's house. I slowly dazed off to sleep, exhausted from doing all of Tree's house chores and having to put up with him bossing me around for the first half of the day.

(Pen's nightmare)

I woke up in a dark, endless space. The air around me smelled like earth and I was in a small, claustrophobic space. My feet and hands are bound together by thick, itchy rope. I tried to wiggle my limbs loose from my restraints but to no avail. That's when I heard the sound of dirt being shoveled on top of the box I was in. For a couple of seconds, I had to comprehend what was going on, but it didn't take long for me to notice that I was being buried alive.

"Hello! Hey! I'm in here! Stop shoveling!" I desperately yelled at the top of my lungs. I had no idea how I would get out of here alive. I kept screaming and panicking, but my cries for help could not be heard. The dirt on top of my box was getting heavier and heavier by the second. I eventually slipped out of my leg restraints and tried kicking open the top of the box. The box was made of a strong metal, which was welded shut to be airtight. No matter how hard I kicked, I could do nothing but panic. It was becoming harder to breathe as seconds passed, and I slowly suffocated to death inside the box.

(Back to reality)

I woke up in a cold sweat and caught my breath. I stood up and saw Tree standing by my bedside.

"Pen! I could hear you screaming from my room. Are you okay?" He urgently asked.

"Yeah dude, I'm fine, just a nightmare. Sorry for waking you." I tiredly stated.

Although Tree had a broken ankle, he comforted me and got me things even though I was the one who was supposed to be doing all of that for him. I was still sweating like crazy and shaking with fear. I didn't realize that my speech was stuttering and I couldn't think straight. Tree offered to sleep in my room to comfort me for the night. I quickly nodded with no hesitation.

When Tree came into my room, I instantly felt safer. I have had nightmares like that, but I don't recall them being even close to as intense. Since I was overheating, Tree got me an ice pack and a damp paper towel to rub on my face. The cold water hit me like a breeze of fresh air on a hot summer day. I didn't sleep well that night, but I slept much better than I would have if Tree hadn't come to check up on me.

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Hey readers, sorry for the delayed upload today. I'm so busy these days and I couldn't work on the story as much as I previously could. Anyways, thanks again for reading. Stay awesome y'all!

Chapter 4: Publishing 10/22/23

Chapter 4 - Pillow

I silently lay in my room, texting Pie and Bottle about the trip. I'm still flabbergasted by the fact I was able to convince my dad to let me drive my friends 5 hours to New Orleans. Although I was extremely excited about the trip, I had a slight worry that something bad would happen. I couldn't lay a finger on exactly what would happen, but I had a strange gut feeling that some terrible, unexpected event would occur later.

I proceeded to pack my things and organize all my clothes. Although my friends and I would only be gone for three days, I packed about six sets of clothes just in case. I was in the middle of packing my suitcase when I heard my dad call me from my living room.

"Pillow, can you take out the trash real quick?" My dad calmly asked from downstairs.

"Yeah Dad, I will!!" I quickly replied.

WARNING: DOMESTIC ABUSE

My dad was an overall nice person despite being the wealthiest individual in Goiky. He was always friendly with others and tipped people who served him heavily. As a result, everyone knew who he was and he was extremely well-liked by the Goiky community. However, he masked his grief very well. Five years ago, his wife died in a plane crash and his personality altered greatly from it. Before, he was more strict, however, you could see his happiness in his eyes whenever he walked about. Now, although he's much more sociable, you can see a depressed, saddened look in his pupils if you squint closely. Because he became depressed from the whole ordeal, he became heavily addicted to alcohol. When my dad would drink alcohol, he would become extremely angry. Every time he would drink, he would chase me down and try to hit me with either his

hand or a blunt force object in some cases. Because of my dad's psychopathic tendencies when he was drunk, I had a very tough childhood growing up. Since my dad would drink very often, every time I would get home from school or go out, he would meet me at the door, drag me inside, and abuse me. I never told anyone about this back then, but I greatly regret not telling anyone to this day.

Recently, he has laid off drinking a bit more, and when he does, the negative effects aren't as intense, however, I have many scars from his abuse. I still love him dearly, as he is a genuine, nice person, but I will never forget what he does when he drinks.

On the outside, many people see me as a spoiled teenager who lives a perfect life with no problems and gets whatever she desires. I could see people picturing me that way, but they couldn't be more wrong. I spent all my teenage years dealing with my problems and almost giving up for good and leaving him.

I finished packing and took out the trash. While I was slowly wheeling the trash bins over to the side of my house, I saw Fanny and her friends pass by. They immediately stopped their car, parked it, and got out. Fanny, her boyfriend Snowball, and Bubble got out and walked up to me.

"Oh look, if it isn't the rich snob!" Fanny rudely remarked.

"Can I help you guys at all?" I asked, trying my hardest to be polite.

"Yeah, you can go back to your house, the trash!" Snowball teased.

"Ha ha very funny." I solemnly stated, now a tad bit annoyed. "Get lost fatty. Your fake girlfriend and her bestie are embarrassed to be seen with you"

This made Snowball very angry since Bubble started to laugh a bit, along with Fanny, who surprisingly chuckled too. Snowball turned bright red, and before I knew it, he was pacing towards me with a large frown. Snowball towered over me, the dude was 6 feet 4 inches tall. He lifted me into the air and took me somewhere. I tried to fight him and call for help.

"Help! Get this psycho off of me!" I yelled, trying to fight Snowball.

He took me over to the trash bin I had just laid out on the side of my house. He dangled me over the trash bin and threatened to put me in there if I didn't apologize. At that moment, I was wearing designer clothes and didn't want anything to be ruined. I frantically apologized, however, Snowball was unfazed. He dropped me into the trash bin and shut the lid. Before I knew it, I was inside my trash bin. I tried to open the top, but Snowball placed two 50-pound sandbags on top of the lid, trapping me inside. He laughed maniacally alongside Fanny. I could hear them taunting me. My blood was boiling. I was so close to them, but I couldn't do anything since I was trapped. The stench of the trash can made me throw up. It smelled rancid inside the trash bin. I thought to myself, "Is this really happening?" I heard them stop laughing and leave. That was it. No one was going to save me from this.

That's what I thought until I heard some footsteps come up to the bin. I heard the sandbags get pushed to the ground. Someone actually came to free me. I opened the lid to see Bubble standing outside, she had tears in her eyes and stared at me as I climbed out.

"I'm sorry. I should have stopped my friends sooner. I didn't know they would go this far." Bubble started speaking.

"You didn't do anything, it's okay," I said. "The only important part is that you had the heart to help me.

Bubble told me her friends stopped the car to drop her off at her house. She happened to live only a couple blocks away from my house. She explained that Snowball and Fanny planned to do that because they were jealous that you were so successful, and they punished you due to pure jealousy. I nodded and told her I understood where they were coming from, however, I wasn't surprised they would do that. They were the school bullies at my school, after all. I knew Bubble didn't deserve friends like this and that she deserved friends who actually cared about her and didn't just use her for their benefit. I learned that Bubble wasn't actually friends with Fanny. She had only befriended her since she didn't want her and Snowball to bully and torment her like they did to everyone at school.

I walked with Bubble back to her place and when she was about to enter her house, she told me to wait outside. I agreed since I had nothing else to do.

She later came outside with enough money for me to buy a new outfit. Sure it wouldn't afford my current outfit, which was designer, but it would cover at least 75% of the cost. I was shocked she would do such a big favor despite not knowing me well at all.

"Oh, my goodness. Thank you so much!" I joyfully screamed before hugging her.

"You really don't have to thank me, I'm just doing the right thing." Bubble replied.

"Still. You didn't have to!" I exclaimed, still overjoyed by the generous act. It had been a while since anyone besides my dad had something that nice for me.

"Yeah! No problem!"

Before going inside, she gave me her phone number so we could chat online. I knew I had to pay her back somehow. That's when I got an amazing idea. I would invite her to go to New Orleans with my friends.

That evening, my dad asked why I was gone for so long just to take out the trash. I lied saying that my friends took me out to get a drink. He was always oblivious to my lies. Luckily, he didn't question me or find my stained dress. I hid my dress under my mattress and decided to throw it away the next morning.

The rest of the night went like normal. My dad got our personal chef to prepare us some garlic-seared wagyu. He did so very quickly. I ate food like this all the time, considering my dad would send me out to go shopping for groceries. I always knew what to get since my dad would write a list beforehand.

I got on my phone and started texting my friends about the trip tomorrow.

Private DMs (direct messages):

Pillow: Hey Bubble! Are you free to go on a trip with my friends and me?

Bubble: I'm free for the next couple of days! Where to?

Pillow: New Orleans!

Bubble: If we're going to the beach, count me in!

Pillow: Sounds good. Meet me at my house at 11:00 am tomorrow, everyone will be here.

Group chat:

Pillow added Bubble to the chat.

Bubble: Hey 👏

Bottle: Hi!

Remote: Hello.

Pen: Wassup

Pillow: Bubble is joining us on the trip.

Pen: Bet. Sounds good to me. The more the merrier am I right?

Tree: Eight people in one car? Do you have a car big enough Pillow?

Pillow: Yeah, my dad rented out a Limo to drive us.

Tree: You really go all out on everything don't you?

Pillow: You already know I do, Tree.

I shut my phone off before getting ready for bed. Tomorrow was going to be a blast. My dad noticed that I wasn't wearing my luxury dress and asked me about it. Once he asked me, I felt pressure to tell him the truth. I lifted my mattress and showed that I had stained it. I told him what had happened and I saw his eyes turn bright red. I was as good as dead.

"No one dares pick on my daughter." He yelled in a blinding rage. "Do you know where they live?"

"No Dad. I don't know where they live. All I know is they drive a white Honda Civic." I replied.

"They're damn lucky I was busy inside when that happened." My dad growled. Although he did some messed up things to me, he loved me dearly and would sacrifice himself for me."

"It's okay. I don't care much about the entire thing." I spoke, trying to calm him down.

He calmed down and asked if I was okay. I told him I was fine and he tucked me into bed. I could tell he cared a ton for me in that brief moment. I fell asleep fast that night, however, I couldn't stop thinking about the recent events that had just occurred a couple of hours ago. These didn't matter now, as they already happened and I was able to control myself and handle the situation the best I could.

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Chapter 5: Publishing 10/25/23

Chapter 5 - Bottle

I woke up in a cold sweat, as I hadn't slept well the night before. I was just too excited to go on a trip with my best friends! I stayed at Pie's house since she had a spare suitcase. Groggy, I noticed it was eight in the morning and decided to sleep another hour, as Pie and I only had to leave by 10:45 since it took 15 minutes to drive to Pillow's house. However, I failed to notice Pie standing right next to my open door with a megaphone.

"WAKE UP SLEEPYHEAD!" Pie yelled into the megaphone on full volume.

I jumped out of bed and let out a high-pitched scream. Pie started hysterically laughing at my reaction.

"Gotcha!" Pie continued laughing.

Upon realizing Pie had woken me up, I frowned and went back to bed, telling Pie to let me sleep.

"Nuh uh, Bottle! We gotta get ready for the vacation!" Pie told me. Although she was my best friend, she could be pretty over the top and annoying sometimes.

I had no other choice but to get up and get ready. I did my morning routine in her house. I've been to Pie's house so many times, her parents consider me her sister. Today, I decided to put extra makeup on since I wanted to look good for my friends, specifically Tree, whom I admired greatly since middle school. Pie's mom had already prepared breakfast for the two of us. Pie's parents were generally pretty strict, however, they took it a little easier on Pie today since she was about to leave. Although Pie's parents were strict towards her, they were always really nice to me, letting me stay at Pie's house for weeks, even months, at a time.

After breakfast, Pie and I grabbed our luggage and got ready to leave. Pie's parents waved us goodbye and even slipped us some gum for the ride. According to them, it made Pie more focused on driving.

Pie and I left the house and drove to Pillow's house. I called shotgun despite being the only one besides Pie in the car. During the ride, Pie and I talked about nothing but memes and friends. I showed Pie a picture Tree sent me in private messages. The picture was of Pen doing push-ups on his bed while watching his favorite anime. Not only was the picture funny, but also the caption read "Never skip arm day." Upon showing the picture to Pie, she started laughing loudly. She laughed so hard, she swerved a bit on the freeway. As a result, some drivers honked at her, but she didn't care much.

Halfway through the drive, Pie noticed she forgot to fill her car with gas, so we had to stop by a gas station on the way.

"Pie, can we buy some snacks for the road? I don't wanna be hungry!" I whined.

"Ugh. No Bottle, I don't wanna be spending too much money without my parents knowing." Pie sternly replied.

"Please???" I replied with puppy eyes. I knew Pie couldn't say no to me when I did that.

"Okay okay. I can't say no to that face." Pie gave a warm smile.

"Yayy! Thank you Piey!" I tightly hugged her with a big smile. Pie laughed and hugged me back gently.

We walked into the gas station and decided to spend quite a bit on food. Pie ended up spending 50 dollars on snacks alone, excluding gas. When we went to purchase our snacks, the cashier became wide-eyed as he saw us put a mountain of goods on the counter. We saw him mutter to himself, "I don't get paid enough for this," before scanning all the items.

We left the gas station with a full tank and two grocery bags full of snacks.

"I thought you weren't going to spend much you said," I questioned.

"I decided to make exceptions for you," Pie stated. She smiled at me and I slightly blushed.

We got back on the road and proceeded to drive to Pillow's house. Upon arriving on the right street, we saw Fanny and her boyfriend sitting on a park bench gossiping about people at school. That's when Pie got a genius idea. We were going to prank them.

Pie opened one of the many water bottles we bought at the gas station. She drank some of the water and filled the remaining space with some other ingredients. She started by putting some Carolina Reaper pepper seeds inside the bottle. Pie had a love for spicy foods, so she brought some from home and bought some at the gas station. She sprinkled some seeds into the bottle and added some hot sauce for even more carnage. I found some rubbing alcohol in my luggage since I liked sanitizing my hotel room before entering. I sprayed some of it into the bottle. Pie finished it off by spitting in the bottle before shaking the dangerous concoction up. She cut a small hole in the top of the bottle with a pocket knife she found in her car's glove box. This was gonna be good.

Pie rolled down her car window and got their attention.

"Hey, bitches! Chew on this!" She blurted.

Pie proceeded to spray Fanny and her boyfriend Snowball with the toxic solution. She purposefully aimed for the eyes and mouth. Her aim was immaculate, as she was able to douse both of them with the spicy solution. It turns out, Carolina Reapers are the hottest peppers alive, and their seeds were no exception. After Pie was done having fun, she drove away and threw the bottle at Snowball's face. As we were driving away, we could hear the blood-curdling screams of Fanny and Snowball as the pepper solution got in their eyes and burned their mouths. Revenge was sweet.

"Serves them right for what they did to Pillow yesterday," Pie admitted.

"What are you talking about?" I asked, confused about what Pie was

on about.

Pie told me what Pillow told her happened last night. That's when I thought it was completely justifiable that Pie did what she did. I soon noticed Pie filmed the whole thing with her phone set up on her mirror. She was going to show this footage to all of our friends. I high-fived Pie, as she was one of the most brave people alive. Pie would never back down from any challenge, no matter how dangerous or threatening it was.

Pie and I soon arrived at Pillow's house. We ended up being a couple of minutes late since we pranked Fanny and Snowball. When we arrived, our friends waved to us and Pillow opened her underground garage so we could park our car in there. There were already half a dozen cars in there, three of them belonging to Pillow. Pie parked the car and we wheeled our luggage over to the front of Pillow's house. We also brought our two grocery bags worth of snacks with us. Upon seeing the snacks, Liy started drooling and asked if those were for them. We nodded and put the snacks in the limo. I had never been in a limo before in my life. The car was longer than a school bus and was tall enough so Pen, the tallest member in our group, could stand upright without having to bend over. This was a big deal since Pen was 6 feet tall. Tree had also noticeably healed quite a bit since I had last seen him. Since he was a tree, his bones regenerated very fast, and it wouldn't take long for his foot to get better. He only had a small cast on his foot, but he could wear his shoes normally and walk around like nothing had happened. However, he was a bit slower than he was before.

We all got into the car and made ourselves at home. The comfort of the limo was unmatched. The interior walls were made of soft, silky velvet and there were two long couch-like chairs on either side of the car. Since Pie and I knew Pillow very well, we laid down on the seats, which Pillow laughed at since she was used to us doing things like that. Lily was a connoisseur of food and we knew she loved Twix bars. Pie knew this and bought a ton of them. Being the friend she is, she ate one right next to Liy and pretended to ignore her. Liy asked if she could have a bite and Pie told her no. We could visibly see Liy become sad, as she thought we didn't get any more. That's when I tossed her one and Pie teased her, saying that she would never do

something like that.

While on the ride, Pie, Tree, Remote, and Liy played some card games and bet snacks on the games. The winner would get the snacks when they won. Pen and Remote would end up losing all their snacks, while Liy gained the most, as she was a master at most of the games they played. While they were playing games, Pie, Pillow, and I talked for the entirety of the car ride and played some multiplayer games on our phones. It turns out that the limo also had built-in wifi.

"Hey Pillow, I thought you invited Bubble. Why isn't she here?" I politely questioned while I could.

"Oh, Bubble was feeling under the weather today and decided she shouldn't come," Pillow replied.

"What a loser, imagine ditching." Pie insensitively interrupted.

"Hey don't be mean," I jokingly told Pie, as she could sometimes be a bit rude to others.

Pie chuckled and said she was kidding. We kept on talking about the most random topics we could think of. For half an hour, we argued about if there were more wheels or doors on the planet. Pie, Remote, Tree, and I thought doors since many things could be taken into consideration, while the others argued wheels. We had a heated debate and gave our reasons why we were right and the opposing team was wrong. Pen ended up accidentally spilling his water bottle on the floor of the limo.

"Nice one Pen!" Tree sarcastically remarked.

Pen still had some remaining water in his bottle and used that to drench Tree in water. There wasn't much, but it was enough to soak Tree. Tree was surprised by this and wrestled Pen to the ground. Keep in mind all this was happening in the back of a car. I felt bad for the driver for having to listen to some rowdy seniors the entire drive. Before I knew it, Pen and Tree were having a wrestling match on the floor.

"HOLD IT!" Tree spoke in a loud, demeaning tone.

Pen and Tree stopped wrestling on the spot.

"Say Pen, why are we wrestling again?"

"Umm, because we aren't supposed to be?" Pen replied with a smirk.

"Right!"

Tree and Pen resumed their wrestling match, despite Tree having a healing foot. Pen managed to Pin Tree on the floor since he worked out a ton and overpowered Tree eventually even though Tree was extremely strong himself. Pie videotaped the whole thing and the others were just watching while eating snacks. Pen helped Tree up and teased him for being weak. They had some friendly banter before sitting down again. Everyone else in the car was hysterically laughing at the whole ordeal. Tree was still soaked from Pen pouring water on his head.

The rest of the journey went by normally, with everyone doing normal things. We soon arrived at the hotel we would stay at. Pillow booked us two rooms and told us we could choose which room to stay in. Both were identical and on the top floor of the hotel The view was beautiful. When you look out the window, you can see the beach and the New Orleans shoreline. Pen, Tree, Remote, and Liy shared a room, while I went with my friends, Pie and Pillow. We all first decided to unpack our things and get settled in our new room. Upon entering our rooms, Pie dropped dead on the bed. She was fast asleep since she woke up super early this morning to get ready for the trip. Pillow and I chuckled and lay in the same bed as Pie. Luckily, we didn't wake her. We got out our phones and started texting the other room. I sanitized everything upon entering.

Pillow: You guys like the rooms I chose? I made sure to pick the best ones for the trip.

Pen: Yeah! This room is awesome. The only problem is 4 people in our room have to fit on one bed.

Tree: Pen, you're sleeping on the floor. You pull all-nighters anyways.

Pen: You're not the boss. I say you're sleeping on the couch.

Tree: Make me

Bottle: Lol

Pen: Update: Tree has me in a headlock and refuses to let go unless I sleep on the floor

Bottle: Oh my goodness haha. Tree is so goofy.

Remote: Tell me about it.

Liy: Yeah. All this bozo has done so far is beat Pen up and take his laptop.

At this point, it was pretty late at night and we all called it a day. Sleeping in the same bed as my friends felt a bit weird, but I was pretty comfortable since I had known them for a very long time. We could hear Pen and Tree fighting over who sleeps on the ground. Tree ended up winning and Pen slept on the floor. Today was great. Before going to bed, I turned on my nightlight, as I was scared of the dark. My friends didn't mind since they were knocked out instantly. I drank some cold water and put some earplugs in before dozing off to sleep that night. Although Pie was sometimes a snorer, she put some mouth tape over her mouth so she wouldn't snore during the night. I looked over at my friends and smiled as I was so happy to be around them.

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Whew! My longest part yet. We officially reached 100 views on the story! Thank you so much to all the viewers who have read my story! I promise I'll be consistently writing more parts and trying to improve the story as much as I can.

Chapter 6: Publishing 10/25/23

Chapter 6 - Remote

I woke up to the sound of talking at the foot of my bed. Sharing a room with 4 people isn't easy. Last night, Pen and Tree were fighting over who would have to sleep on the floor. Although it was funny for a short while, it got annoying fast since they were cutting into my precious sleep time, which I cherished profusely. Tree ended up sleeping in the same bed as Liy and me. Thank god no one in the room was a snorer.

Pen was sitting on the couch with the phone to his ear. He asked what we wanted to order for room service.

"Isn't room service super expensive?" I questioned since Pillow was paying for the trip.

"Don't worry, I already asked if we could. Of course, she replied yes." Pen advocated.

"Don't order six protein shakes like you did last time we hung out on vacation." Liy bluntly stated.

"It was five, not six," Pen said with a slight frown.

"Same thing. Either way, it's too many."

Pen asked us for our orders and called the hotel to place an order. We knew Pillow would be ordering for her and her friends. We heard Pie say that Pen was a "goofy individual" through the wall. Tree hysterically laughed at this. It was pretty obvious by now that Pen was the group's punching bag. He was the youngest after all.

While everyone waited for the food to arrive, we played poker and made a rule that the winner would pick someone to do a dare. Pen surprisingly won, despite having the worst poker face of everyone. Every time Pen got a good hand, he would smile and everyone knew

what he had. We all tried to stop Pen from winning but to no avail. Surprisingly, Pen chose Liy to do a dare. He reasoned that Liy was the shyest in the room and he was tired of picking on Tree. Pen dared Liy to prank call our other friends in the room next door. Liy was hesitant at first, but she eventually did the dare. She came up with an elaborate plan to make the prank call as funny as possible. She explained that she would call as the hotel receptionist and claim they were making too much noise. From there, she would keep calling them and annoy them to death.

Liy picked up the hotel phone and dialed the other room's landline. It didn't take long for someone to pick up. She hoped it was Bottle since she would be the most likely to believe it, but to her dismay, Pie was on the receiving end.

"Hello, this is the hotel receptionist. We've been getting some noise complaints from your room and request you keep the noise down." Liy spoke in a high-pitched country-girl voice.

"Okay. Sorry miss, we'll keep the noise down." Pie reluctantly stated. Liy could tell she was confused based on her tone of voice.

Five minutes passed. Liy picked up the phone again and dialed the same number as last time.

"Hello?" said the voice on the other end. Liy could tell that Pie was on the other end again.

"Hi, front desk again. Listen, you obviously did not understand what I said earlier about the noise. You need to keep the noise down." Liy said while she was crying from laughing.

"I think you have the wrong number. We aren't making any noi-"

"MA'AM LISTEN. You either keep down the noise or we will be calling the authorities." Liy asserted.

"Okay... I'm sorry." Pie said on the other end. We could hear her heavy breathing through the phone.

"Thank you."

Before Liy hung up the phone, she said, "Damn Pastries." ***(pastry is a race in this au)***

Everyone in the room was laughing their eyes out. Pen started choking on his own saliva and Tree was crying to death. I was laughing too since I didn't know Liy was capable of saying something as diabolical as that. We laughed for 5 minutes straight and Pen gave Liy a high five after he was done dying of laughter.

A short while after Liy hung up the phone, we heard loud footsteps coming towards our room. The laughter in the room instantly shifted to fear. Pen went to check the peephole of the front door and Pie was knocking outside. He stared back at us and I gestured to him to open the door. He opened the front door and Pie walked in. She shut the door behind her and looked at all of us with the most deadpan expression you could imagine.

"Fool you not gonna believe it," Pie said with a shaky voice. We all stared at her trying not to laugh or smile. Everyone just stared in silence for a couple of seconds.

"This hotel is racist."

"PFFT REALLY?" Liy asked with the most joyous expression. Everyone could tell Pie was steaming mad since she started talking in her native, Mexican accent.

"Why do you say that?"

"Fool the lady at the front desk. She doesn't like pastries." Pie explained again with a deadpan expression.

"So what are you gonna do about it?" Liy asked back.

"Oh, I'm gonna beat her ass," Pie said, now with a slightly angrier tone.

"Wait wait wait you don't have to beat anybody up maybe you just need to go talk to her," Liy spoke, now worried. She nudged me and voiced, "Remote tell her."

I tried to play it off and shakily muttered, "Yeah yeah! Just go talk to

her!"

"Don't care. Imma do it." Pie said, now with an even angrier expression.

Pie then took off and started pacing down the hallway. While she was walking, Liy uttered, "Guys we gotta see this. This is gonna be so good." We all followed after Pie. She noticed us following her but didn't care one bit. Halfway through the walk, she starts running super fast. Keep in mind that she already had a 40+ foot headstart and we were trying to catch up to her. She made it to the lobby a good 30 seconds before we did. The girls at the front desk were doing their job checking people in. They had no idea what was happening. Pie stomped up to the front desk after the last person in line got their keys. She slammed her hands on the desk and stared the two girls straight in the eyes.

"Which one of you bitches said pastries." She shouted.

Both of the girls stared at her wide-eyed. One of them ducked behind the desk. The other one pointed at her and with 100% fear, said, "Oh my god an angry Pastry!!!"

"Oh my god look it's not my fault the Golden Knights lost okay." She said in an extremely frightened tone.

"Don't take it out on me please okay?"

Pie and the girl at the front desk kept arguing back and forth, and finally, we made it to the lobby all winded from running as fast as we could. We saw Pie shouting at the lady at the front desk and she was just taking the screaming right then and there.

"Pie! Pie! Don't do it girl don't do it!" Liy spoke, panting from the long run."

"Shut up, fool, you don't know what's happening."

"Pie I can explain everything!" Liy said, louder this time.

"Fool shut the hell up."

All of a sudden, a security guard sprints into the building and takes down Pie. Liy whispered to me that she let this get out of hand and she had to break it up. She walked over to Pie, who was on the ground. She whispered in her ear, "Ma'am, you're going to have to keep the noise down." In the same voice, she used on the phone to prank her. Pier immediately went frozen, wide-eyed at what Liy had just said.

"Fool was that you?" Pie asked, now looking much more nervous than before.

"Yes ma'am," Liy replied with the same voice.

"You an asshole." Pie glared at her with a solemn expression.

"I know. It was pretty funny though!" Liy broke into hysterics.

The security guard told us he assumed it was a prank and proceeded to let Pie go instantly. Pie got up and immediately stared at Liy. Pie apologized to the staff and everyone else, who were pretty understanding of the whole situation despite knowing nothing about it.

"Wait until we get back to the room." She frowned.

We walked back to our hotel rooms and once Liy was about to walk into her room, Pie grabbed her and playfully put her in a headlock.

"You're a real asshole Liy you know that?" Pie softly spoke now in her normal accent.

She proceeded to grab a pillow and start hitting Liy with it repeatedly. However, she stopped when she noticed us all laughing at the whole ordeal.

"What are you guys laughing at?" Pie glared.

She then started beating the entire group up with a pillow. She was surprisingly strong since she grew up in the Mexican outback. Once she was done taking her anger out on us, she left and told us next time, prank Bottle or Pillow. We continued laughing and Liy became much more talkative after the incident.

The entire day went as normal. We hung out in our hotel rooms and went on a walk across the beach that day. Pie ended up forgiving Liy for the day, however, she still brought it up at dinner and gave Liy a noogie, messing up her hair. We checked out the city and observed the beautiful scenery. We were in uptown New Orleans, so everything looked clean and beautiful, unlike the city's downtown counterpart. We visited some shops and Pen bought a skateboard for himself as a souvenir to take back home.

That night, Tree agreed to sleep on the ground, as he felt bad for Pen having to sleep on the ground the previous night. Liy and I stayed up late to talk about the prank and how Pie was a rather funny individual. Liy said she felt bad for taking the prank too far. I reassured her she didn't and that it was all fun and games. We both fell asleep next to each other and Liy hugged me before going to bed. Before I went to bed, I asked Pillow what we would plan tomorrow since it would be our second day here.

Remote: What are we planning to do tomorrow? I checked the weather and it's gonna be 95 degrees!

Pillow.: I was planning for a beach day tomorrow. Sounds fun?

Remote: Totally. It's a good thing I came well-prepared for the beach.

Pie: Same.

Tree: Guys go to bed, it's rather late now

Remote: You aren't my dad

Tree: I'm just looking out for you guys

Remote: Ok fine, we'll go to bed. Goodnight everyone.

Pie: Gn

Pillow: Sweet dreams.

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Hey y'all! Hope you're having an amazing day today. If you are, amazing. If not, I hope my chapters cured some of your boredom and made your day slightly better. Anyway, Thank you to everyone who reads my story. It means the world to me that people read my stories. I'm completely open to feedback, so if you don't like something or if there's something I could improve, don't hesitate to tell me. Stay awesome dudes.

Chapter 7: Publishing 10/28/23

Chapter 7 - Liy

Pen was feeling woozy. He drank about seven shots of liquor last night. Despite clearly lying about his age, the bartender assumed he was 21 and decided to give him some shots anyway. He thought Pen was going to share the shots with us, which is why he gave him exactly seven. Instead of sharing the shots, Pen drank them all in the span of ten seconds. Pen woke the room up by falling flat on his face during the morning sunrise. He was clearly still dizzy, which surprised no one.

"Hayy giys! Yaknow, whenever I'm thinking about Treeh nawt sleepin with me, I get all sad and stuff, but whenevs I'm with y'all, I'm ALLL happy agayn!" Pen slurred, obviously drunk.

"Okay?" Tree said with a large grin.

"Yahh I know am drunk!" Pen continued.

I whispered in Tree's ear, asking him why he was so calm about this. He explained Pen always acted silly when he drank too much.

"Nevamind I'll just sleep by myself. YAYYYYYY!" Pen kept on talking. He was hammered.

Remote chuckled and started recording to possibly get some good footage of drunk Pen. She recorded for about a minute and managed to get Pen to say the most outrageous things on camera. He even started dancing in the middle of the room. Tree then burst into hysterics.

"This is why I'm sober, unlike this idiot." Tree calmly remarked.

It took about an hour for Pen to become normal again. Remote didn't tell him about the footage, but she was definitely going to show some of her friends the video for giggles.

The room ate breakfast and talked with each other for another hour. They were discussing what they would do at the beach that day. Tree planned to go swimming in the ocean and beat Pen up. Pen said he would bring his surfboard, which barely fit in the car that trip. I knew Remote had a fear of water, being electronic. As a result, I decided I would hang out with Remote on the recliners next to the beach. Although she was scared of water and anything in it, she still loved going to the beach, as she could get a free tan and visit the local shops. While we were talking, we heard our doorbell ring. We knew it was Pillow and the others since Pillow had texted us before when she would be arriving at the door. Tree opened the door and saw Pillow, Pie, and Bottle all in their swim gear.

"You guys ready to hit the beach or what?" Bottle excitedly squealed.

"You already know it." Pen snidely replied. He was the only one out of all of us who had changed into his swim gear before Bottle and friends arrived.

The rest of us except Remote changed into our swim gear. Since everyone was lazy and wanted a tan, no one decided to put sunblock on. Although it was 95 degrees outside, the sun wasn't directly on us. We walked out of the room and carried on to the beach. We walked out of the building and saw the lady at the front desk glare at Pie. Pie pretended not to notice her, as she didn't care about that type of stuff. The walk to the beach was rather short, lasting about 5 minutes. We took a route through the city square and saw many others going to the beach too. It didn't take long before we found the shore. Pen instantly took off his sandals and t-shirt and darted into the water. He took his surfboard and went out deep into the ocean. Tree, Bottle, Pie, and Pillow followed shortly after. The ocean was particularly warm that day, as I went to feel the temperature of the water. Being the nice, introverted person I was, I carried all of our belongings and found some recliners for us. Remote and I found the perfect spot and lay in the hot, dry sun. Remote put her sunglasses on and started to get into the zone.

"You can go in the ocean if you want. Don't let me stop you from having fun." Remote politely exclaimed.

"Are you sure? Wouldn't I be considered a bad friend to leave you

here alone?" I asked.

"Not at all. I know for a fact you like the water. Plus, I was gonna fall asleep anyways."

I shrugged and went into the water too. I slowly got in, but quickly realized Bottle and Pillow splashing each other. When they both saw me, they noticed I hadn't gotten that wet yet, and proceeded to spray me with water. I got drenched within a matter of seconds. I splashed them back and pulled out my secret. I hadn't told my friends this, but I brought along a water gun. Now in hysterics, I sprayed them. They had no other choice but to retreat. I maniacally laughed at them and chased them through the ocean. Pen and Tree eventually joined in on the fun, with Pen using his surfboard as a shield. That day, there weren't many waves since there was no wind. As a result, Pen didn't surf much at all. We played like this for a while, until Pen went over to Remote and searched his bag. He pulled out a football and we played a couple of 3 versus 3 games. It was apparent that Pie, Bottle, and Pillow would be on a team, and I was stuck with Pen and Tree. I didn't mind, but I predicted the outcome of the teams. Pen was an athletic freak. He threw footballs faster than a speeding car and with military sniper-like accuracy. All of us except Bottle had experience playing football, as there was a boys and girls football team at our high school. Pen threw a long bomb to Tree, who dove into the water to get the ball. Tree caught the ball with one hand and taunted the other team by hitting the "Griddy" on Bottle, who he had scored on. I laughed at this since Tree was celebrating on someone who had never played football a day in her life. We played football for a good 30 minutes and had a blast doing so. We all went to wake Remote up and get lunch. When we went over to wake Remote up, she was out like a light. She had gotten a slight tan, but not too much since we only played in the ocean for about two hours. I lightly tapped Remote to wake her up.

"Huh? Am I awake?" Remote asked, still half asleep.

"Yes, you are!" I laughed and helped her up.

We gathered all our things and went to the local fish house to eat. We

sat down and talked about how fun our time at the beach was, as we were going to go to the pool after we ate. Although we knew there was a myth that eating right before swimming causes cramps, we didn't care the slightest bit. Once we sat down, we all coincidentally ordered the same thing since the restaurant was famous for its fish and chips. It didn't take long for the food to arrive. The smell was phenomenal. You could smell how it tasted. We dug in and inhaled the meal. All of the food was gone faster than it got there. In the middle of our meal, someone walked up to Pen and started flirting with him. Pen tried ignoring her, but it all ended when she started touching him. Keep in mind his shirt was off so her touching him was really awkward. Pen pushed her away and told her to get off of him. She was surprised he would push her, and she proceeded to walk away.

"Who was that?" I asked, wanting to know who she was if Pen had known her.

"My ex," Pen sighed.

"You had an ex?" Pie asked with confusion.

"Sadly yes. She became too obsessive and manipulative as time passed. She even once tried to steal from me without me noticing. Luckily, I wasn't so naive and kicked her out once I saw what she was doing."

Pie got out of her seat and went to settle something. She told us she had unfinished business. I knew Pie was pretty badass, but my jaw dropped when she started following the person who had just flirted with Pen. She caught up to her and gave her a moderately strong push.

"Woah! What was that for?" She asked, trying to seem innocent.

"Don't touch my friend again. Understood?" She grabbed her by the shirt and pulled her closer.

"Okay okay! Sorry! Just let me go please!" The girl whimpered, fearing for her safety.

Pie dropped her on the ground and walked back to her seat as if nothing happened.

"No one does that to my friends and gets away with it," Pie exclaimed with a smug grin.

"Thank you so much, Pie. I can always rely on you to be the ass-kicker of the group." Pen laughed.

"Don't mention it. Anyways, are we gonna hit the pool soon? It's getting late in the afternoon and I wanna claim the volleyball courts all to ourselves." Pie excitedly explained.

"Yep! I'm getting the check now." Pillow chimed in.

We got the check and walked over to the pool. It was our lucky day since the volleyball court was free. We claimed it and asked the lifeguard for a volleyball. He gladly gave us one and we started playing. Remote watched us and videotaped so she could post it on her social media page. We switched up the teams to make it more fair. Pen and Pie had to be split up since both were pros at volleyball, and everyone else was okay. Bottle was slightly better than others since she made the volleyball team three out of her four years. We played for about an hour and Pie, Tree, and Pillow ended up beating us. The game was close, but Pie had the upper hand, as she was extremely good at spiking. Pen and Bottle did their best to retrieve it, but they only succeeded about 60 percent of the time. I was just there for moral support and to set to them, since they were so much better than me. Sports hadn't always been my thing. I was an expert at coding and writing JavaScript as opposed to sports. Either way, playing with my friends was always fun and exciting.

After we were done playing, we decided to call it a day in the water and walked back over to pick up our belongings. This time, Remote was awake, as she was entertained by us playing. We were all exhausted from playing all day and Remote had to slow down to match our pace while we were walking back to our hotel rooms. We went into our hotel rooms and changed back into our normal clothes. We all collectively agreed on renting a taxi and going to a nearby mall to shop around and eat.

"Today was fucking awesome!" Pie excitedly yelped.

"I know right!" Pen and Tree both simultaneously agreed.

They couldn't have been more correct. This day was awesome. What's even better is that Remote had fun too, despite tanning the whole time. We got ready and headed off to the mall. The taxi we booked arrived early and we drove to the mall. When we got there, we were greeted with some over-the-top decor all around the building. Since this was New Orleans, the mall was rather crowded outside, with civilians everywhere. We all walked inside and went to all the shops. Pillow offered to pay for anything we bought, as her dad said she could spend as much as she wanted since she was with her friends. The group decided to split. Remote and I went together, Pen and Tree did so too, and the remaining friends went together too. We all came to a consensus that we would meet back at the mall's sushi restaurant at 7:00 pm when we were done shopping.

Remote and I walked throughout the mall together. We talked about how the swimming day went. Remote said she still had a good time even though she didn't swim because she got to take a super long nap, which energized her for the day. She complimented the heels I wore to the mall, as Pillow got them for me as a birthday present a couple of months prior. Remote then proceeded to ask if we could go to the gaming store, which I agreed to without hesitation. We observed the map legend by the entrance of the mall and went to the gaming store. Remote loved playing Super Smash Bros, as it was one of the only games she had on her gaming system. When we got there, we were astounded by how many games were in the store. The shelves were lined with collector's items, original games, refurbished consoles, and so much more. Remote went on a shopping spree, buying everything she could. She ended up filling our cart with multiple items for her gaming console, along with some batteries for herself.

"Umm Remote, that's a lot of stuff," I said with a slight frown. I didn't want Pillow to be mad that we would spend this much on something as stupid as video games.

"Relax Liy, I sent Pillow a picture of our cart and she said we could check out," Remote answered back.

"Okay... If you say so."

We bought the items at the checkout. My jaw dropped when the cashier announced the price.

"That'll be $835, ma'am." The cashier spoke with a deadpan tone.

Remote paid and had to lug around two bags for the next couple of hours while I was shopping at the clothes store. I didn't want to buy something too expensive since Remote had already spent way too much at the game store. While at the clothing store, we met Pillow and her friends. I told her what Remote bought and she surprisingly wasn't mad. She said it was no big deal and that she was surprised Remote didn't spend more. Remote smirked at me.

"I told you so." Remote gave me a side-eye.

"Shut up Remote. You're so lucky Pillow is the nicest person on earth."

Pillow chuckled at this, saying there was a reason why she paid for the entire trip. I asked Pillow if I could buy a couple of dresses, some sweatpants, and a new pair of sneakers. She agreed without hesitation. I proceeded to pay for the items. Instead of using Pillow's card, I used my own since I didn't want to be taking my friend's money. Pillow soon realized I did this and told me I didn't have to and that she would pay me back later. The rest of our shopping session went as normal. We chatted it up and looked inside all the designer stores. Pillow offered us to buy more, but no one wanted to purchase anything, as these items were super expensive. It was now 6:55, and we went to the sushi restaurant to eat and meet back up with the boys.

Pen and Tree came back with some new shades, high-top sneakers, and a bag full of unknown items. They had spent 1500 dollars and didn't tell Pillow. Pillow half smiled and told them to tell her what they were buying before purchasing next time. Tree apologized and blamed Pen for it. I saw that coming from a mile away.

We ate at the sushi restaurant, and the food was heavenly. Since we were in New Orleans, we ate a ton of fish so far on our trip. Although

I was getting sick of fish, I figured we wouldn't eat it tomorrow so I complied. It was funny seeing Pie and Pen not know how to use chopsticks. Pie slightly got the hang of it eventually, but Pen was holding one stick in each hand and picking up the sushi like that. Tree called him an idiot and proceeded to teach him the right way to hold chopsticks. Pen still didn't get it and gave up. He just used his hands to pick up the sushi. We all laughed and bullied Pen. Pen turned red and looked embarrassed since he was the only one now who couldn't use chopsticks. To top it all off, some waiters were watching and I saw them whispering to each other in Japanese. I could tell they were laughing at Pen.

We later finished our dinner and went home. The taxi was a bit late this time, however, we got back to our hotel very quickly since the driver knew the city like the back of his hand and took some shortcuts. He dropped us off back at our hotel and even did some extra and helped us with our bags. We walked back into the hotel and took the elevator to our rooms. It was now 10:00 pm and we were tired from all the walking and playing we had done that day.

In the hotel, Pen and Tree set up their gaming system and played some horror games. We witnessed them screaming at the game and Tree even fell out of his seat at one of the jumpscares. I was getting free entertainment right next to the foot of my bed. Both of them had their headphones in so they couldn't hear me or Remote.

"Hey Liy, can I tell you something?" Remote asked in a monotone voice.

"Sure! What's up?" I complied. Was she mad about something? Was she okay?

"There's no easy way to tell you this, but I like you." Remote shakily said. She started to lightly blush.

I was surprised at this, and I didn't know what to do. Considering the fact I also liked her platonically, I made up my mind for a couple of seconds. My words stuttered coming out of my mouth.

"I-I-I like you t-too." I shakily responded, not knowing her reaction to this.

Remote's face instantly filled with joy, as she asked if I was serious. I told her I was completely serious and that she was my best friend. We had known each other since we were each 1 year old. According to our parents, we were inseparable. Now seeing we might be together was a shocking moment for me.

We proceeded to give each other a tight hug. Remote was the sweetest friend I could ask for. That night, she told me to keep it a secret until the time was right. I didn't know what she meant by this, but I complied. We slept extra close together that night. Remote gave me a back hug while I went to sleep. I fell asleep super quickly that night, not only from my best friend hugging me for the night but also from the fact that everyone did so much today.

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Oh my goodness. A 3,000+ word chapter. Gosh, I really need to get a life. I should be more productive with my time, but writing this AU is so much fun haha.

Chapter 8: Publishing 10/28/23

Chapter 8 - Pie

WARNING: DEPICTIONS OF VIOLENCE IN THIS CHAPTER

It was currently the middle of the night. Throughout the entire night, my body refused to sleep for unknown reasons. What made it even worse was that if I made any sudden movement, Pillow or Bottle would surely wake up. Of course, I didn't want this to happen. I pushed the sheets off me and silently climbed out of the bed, making the least amount of noise as possible. Although I did a thorough job at making little noise, Pillow somehow woke up, as she was an extremely light sleeper.

"Pie, It's 1:00 am, what are you doing up this late?" Pillow grumpily asked.

"I can't sleep. I think I'll go for a walk to see if I can tire myself out."

I left the room carefully, opened the door, and snuck out, luckily not waking Bottle in the process. The night was chilly and the air was dry.

"You're such an idiot Pie, you know that?" I thought to myself, wondering why I had insomnia for the past couple of days.

On top of all this, I had forgotten my jacket in the hotel room, but I was too lazy to walk back 50 feet to retrieve it. Since the stairs were out of order, I took the elevator and strutted outside the hotel. The night sky stared back at me and reminded me of the times I would sneak out of the house late at night to visit friends. The vague memories came washing back like an endless ocean. Although I forgot my jacket, I brought my phone and earbuds. I turned on some music and started walking around the city of New Orleans. New Orleans looked much better at night than I had initially expected it to. The city lights reflected off of the horizon and made the sky glow a greenish-aqua color. I took a quick walk around the city for half an

hour. Since I was trained to defend myself and I grew up on the streets when I was younger, I ignored all of the shady areas and walked right through them. There were many shady people around this area of New Orleans, however, they seemed to ignore me, as I was tall for a woman and had a bit of bulk. I came to a tea shop in the midtown area of New Orleans. It looked well rundown, but I was desperate to go to sleep and went to order some hot tea.

After ordering my tea, I sat by the window of the shop and stared off into the dark abyss of the city. Midtown wasn't even close to as beautiful as uptown. There were homeless everywhere and the city had a slight stench to it. If this is what midtown was like, what was downtown like? I decided not to go downtown, as I prioritize my safety for an occasion like this. The only person working there brought me my tea and I gave her a tip, as I was surprised by how fast the service was. She warmly smiled and went back into the employees-only room of the shop. I sipped my tea and relished the warm taste of the tea leaves. Green tea wasn't my ideal order at a tea shop, but according to the web, green tea helped relax you and countered bad sleep. I thought about my encounter yesterday at lunch with Pen's ex. I chuckled to myself since I was a bit harsh on her. That last evening, Pen hadn't stopped thanking me since. My friends know I'd do anything for them no matter the circumstances.

I left the shop and thanked the waiter. I decided to go back to the hotel, as it was currently 2:00 in the morning. I brushed my messy hair out of my face and continued walking back to the hotel. It was apparent when I had made it back to uptown since the lights of the city started blinding me and there were taxis and luxury shops everywhere. Although I was certain I was safe, that wasn't the case. I saw someone following me. He had a black trenchcoat and a black hat. He wore a striped scarf and some old, tattered leather boots. I've dealt with creeps before in my life, so I wasn't too worried about this guy. I decided to confirm he was following me by making four right turns around a block of the city. Unsurprisingly, the dude was still tailing me. That's when I got an idea. Up ahead, I saw a group of four, extremely muscular guys. They were all freakishly tall and were talking about weightlifting and bragging to each other about who could lift the most. I tapped one of them on the shoulder and he turned to stare at me.

"Hey, that guy's following me. Pretend you're my dad." I solemnly asked him.

He nodded and walked up to the man.

"Excuse me, who the fuck are you?" He asked.

The man took off his hat and revealed his face. He had a black eye, some scars on his left cheek, and his white shirt underneath was stained with blood. It was now clear this man had bad intentions.

"I wasn't trying to do anything, bro." He reluctantly stated.

The man looked back at me and motioned his eyes at the street, telling me to run. I followed his orders and ran, never looking back. I finally looked back and saw the shady guy pull out a knife in his right hand. He attempted to stab the swole dude I had asked, but he was too slow on the draw. He took down the man with the knife and disarmed him. I watched as he motioned his three friends to beat him up. One of them took the knife and tossed it into a nearby wastebasket. The other two joined in on the main guy and beat the man to a bloody pulp. Once the shady guy was on the ground, I could see a smirk on his face. His other arm concealed a pistol, which he had hidden in his jacket pocket. He shot the big guy and he went flying about ten feet in my direction. The other three guys stepped back and tried to de-escalate the situation, now in fear they would get shot. One of the friends checked on the injured guy and patched up his gunshot wound with a t-shirt. The other two were in a standoff with the armed man. One of them saw me and told me to go away, as he didn't want me getting injured. I proceeded to run, but I had a plan in mind. I looped around the block and before I knew it, I was about a couple yards behind the shady man. My adrenaline rush kicked in and I crept up behind the guy, trying to get the jump on him. That's when the worst possible thing happened. A dry leaf cracked under my sneakers and he instinctively shot backwards. The bullet missed my head by mere inches. I ran into the alley and ducked behind a trash bin. He continued shooting me, but that was his biggest mistake. The two other guys watching jumped on and disarmed him. One put the gun in his mouth and the other held him

down by the neck.

"See you in hell," One of the guys said with a deadpan tone.

He then proceeded to pull the trigger.

Both men stumbled off to check on their friend, who was luckily alive, but badly injured from the gunshot wound to the stomach. One of the men asked if I had a phone on me, to which I instantly nodded. I knew he wanted to call 911, so I dialed the number and made a call.

"911 what's your emergency?"

"Hello, I have a wounded man who needs medical care instantly."

"What's the wound, ma'am?"

"A gunshot wound to the stomach. He's breathing but we'll need care as fast as possible since he's losing blood at a dangerous rate. I'm on the east side of Jackson Square. You'll see me shining a flashlight into the air."

"Thanks for the information. We'll send help now."

I kept the operator on the phone and the men praised me for helping them. They explained that this guy was on a spree in New Orleans. The police have been trying to catch him for the past couple of months but to no avail. Paramedics arrived on the scene in only a couple of minutes. The three other guys thanked me for what I had done. They asked if we could stay in touch, to which I replied, "Sure." We exchanged phone numbers and I told them I had to leave. It was now 3:00 am and I was extremely tired. They offered to walk me home, but I told them I was okay and that they should check up on their injured friend. They waved me goodbye and I put my headphones back in and started walking back to the hotel.

My adrenaline rush ceased and I felt more tired than before. I entered the hotel and proceeded to make my way back to my hotel. I entered silently and didn't wake the others this time. I put my phone on my nightstand and got back into bed. This time, I felt like I would fall

asleep in mere seconds. I wouldn't tell my friends what had happened, but they would see my dirty shoes and my ruffled-up sweatpants. This was one of the most intense nights of my life. Would I get in trouble for this? Would I go to jail? Would my friends be affected by this? All of these questions kept me up at night for some time. Despite these questions, I was grateful I was safe in general.

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Hey all. I'm so sorry for the short chapter. Only 1,600 words! It's just that I've been pretty busy for the past couple of days I was writing this chapter. Alongside this, I figured Pie didn't need that long of a chapter since we already knew so much about her. The good news is that I snuck in an extra chapter before Halloween hehe. Once again, thanks so much for reading!

Chapter 9: Publishing 10/31/23, PLUS HALLOWEEN SPECIAL YEAHHHHH!!!!

ANNOUNCEMENT

Hey all, author here. Just a heads up that I won't post any chapters for a couple of days since I want to write a chapter plus a short Halloween one-shot (taking place in my AU of course haha). As a result, I won't post any legit chapters until October 31, 2023. Thank you all for reading and have an amazing rest of your day/night!

-Strebzl :)

Halloween Party!

NO SHIPS IN THIS, but there are kissing, crushes, and platonic relationships in this. If you don't like reading this type of stuff, I suggest skipping this chapter and keeping reading. Thanks guys!

I had finished putting my costume on, as the Halloween party would start in an hour and a half. Pen called me from down the stairs and asked if I was ready.

"Yep! Coming! Just gotta finish attaching this velcro." I responded.

I attached my fangs to my teeth and finished putting my cloak on.

I went down the stairs and saw Pen in his costume. Pen was a grim reaper for Halloween. His dark cloak masked his entire body and he wore a dark, shadowy mask that made it impossible for you to see his face from the outside. He held a scythe and spun it on his finger.

"Are you sure you can see out of that thing?" I asked.

"If I couldn't see, how would I have walked from my room downstairs?" Pen replied.

"Surprisingly, you have a point," I bluntly remarked.

"What's that supposed to mean!"

I chuckled, knowing Pen hated it when people babied him and didn't take him seriously.

We walked out the door and Pen decided we should bring our props. I instantly agreed as I didn't want my fake blood and fangs to go to waste. I smeared fake blood on my fangs and some on my costume and hands before leaving the house.

Pen told me to drive since his costume slightly obstructed his vision. I

told him to take it off, but he refused. He wanted to look "stylish" for the party and he didn't want to take any chances.

"Look, I know you're hideous, but you have a mask on so no worries!" I cackled.

"Bro! That was cold man," Pen angrily frowned, punching my shoulder in rage.

The drive was normal and we saw some friends going there too. Lightning was driving Stapy, Marker, and Foldy to the party. He waved at us while wearing some shades. Pen and I couldn't see any of their costumes except Lightning since the back windows were tinted. Lightning seemed to be a video game character, but neither Pen nor I could make out who it was, as many characters wore shades. We also saw Teardrop on her bike. We waved to her and she waved back. We asked what she was for Halloween. She made a motion saying we would find out, as she would change when she got there.

We arrived at the party and walked into the building. The main area was huge. There was a TV with eight controllers, gambling tables, lots of alcohol, more snacks than you could imagine, and so much more. It looked like the building was decorated very nicely for Halloween.

"Yo wassup Pen!" I heard from not too far away. Blocky and Eraser were waving at him on a couch. Pen dragged me over and sat down with his bros.

"Nice costume Tree," Eraser commented, looking at my Vampire costume.

"Thanks, dude. Your costume looks fresh too." I saw his costume, which was also a video game character.

Blocky sat down and got us some drinks.

"Dude look at all these drinks I stole from the vending machine!"

Using a quarter attached to a string, Blocky was able to get four free drinks for all of us. We sat down and chatted for about ten minutes before we heard another voice. I heard my name in the distance. I

glanced over and saw Remote and her friends. I waved back and saw them gather around the Poker table.

"Ooh, someone's got some female game," Blocky teased.

"Shut up, they're just friends," I replied with a chuckle.

"Mhm, sure, likely excuse," Eraser followed up.

I rolled my eyes playfully and asked them if they were up for a couple of games on the console. They agreed and we walked over to the community console. There were four seats available and the other four players waved at us.

"Wassup guys!" Lighting waved. "Are you guys ready to lose?"

"Hell no. I'm gonna destroy you." Pen replied.

The other three players were Marker, Teardrop, and Gaty. We queued into a game and started battling each other. Eraser was a hardcore gamer and knew all the loopholes to this fighting game. He picked his favorite character and targeted the strongest players first like Pen and Blocky. Eraser ended up losing to Lightning, who was also a gaming wizard.

"I knew I wouldn't lose to amateurs," He smirked.

"Lucky game. Play me again," Eraser grunted.

We played another round and Eraser won by a long shot. Despite both of these guys talking a big game, everyone was almost equal in skill. We started a tournament, first to three wins. At one point, everyone had one win and it looked like anyone's game. This was until Eraser started turning up the heat. He was hitting wicked combos on Lightning and destroying everyone. Eraser won the next two despite everyone teaming up on him when he was about to get his second win. We all laughed and said good game to each other. Blocky claimed Eraser was "hacking", which I found hilarious. We almost played another round until the doors burst open again. Black Hole arrived in a suit and tie. No one knew what he was, but when he opened the door, everyone screamed his name. Black Hole was the most popular kid at our school. He deserved his popularity too. He

was kind, empathetic, handsome, caring, trustworthy, smart, intelligent, you name it! He was the perfect dude and everyone loved him. He managed to get a 5.0 GPA for the year and worked as a doctor at the age of 18. He instantly got rushed by a bunch of girls. He calmly hugged them all and kept walking.

"Hey, Tree! How have you been?" Black Hole asked with a playful smile. Black Hole has been my friend ever since we were in elementary school. I was his first friend at that. We did our secret handshake and Black Hole greeted everyone else, shaking their hands as he walked through the party. He grabbed a drink and chugged it.

"Whew! That walk was long!" He continued. He sat down on the gaming couch and asked if anyone was up for a game. Black Hole was so popular, everyone wanted to play him."

"Is it cool if I sit here guys?" He politely asked Blocky and Eraser

"Yeah dude, go ahead!" Blocky motioned, giving him a fist bump. Fanny then sat down and tried to flirt with him, despite being Snowball's girlfriend. Black Hole ignored her and pretended like she didn't exist. Fanny got mad and all of her friends laughed at her for being "rejected" by the cute, popular kid. He played some games with us and won all of them. He was better than Eraser had expected. Wherever Black Hole went, the crowd went too. Even when this guy went to the bathroom, people waited outside. Jesus! People were crazy!

While He had many fans, Black Hole also had many haters. People got jealous of his handsomeness and popularity, despite being one of the coolest, nicest guys ever. That goes to show that you could be the nicest and purest person ever and still have people who hate you.

I sat next to Pen and we chatted for the remainder of the party. That's when a DJ wheeled his desk in and turned on some loud music. The lights went dim, the floor started to glow, and the lights became fluorescent. The party was starting now. Suddenly, the bartender pulled out a crate of liquor and shot glasses. Oh boy, people were about to get drunk. Black Hole talked with my friends and me, as he considered me his best friend even though I wasn't popular at all and I was known as a "nerd". This is how I knew that Black Hole was

super loyal. He never left his friends for anyone. He went up to the bartender and asked for ten shots of liquor. The bartender agreed as he thought he would get them for everyone. He gave them out to his friends and drank a couple himself. Once I saw his face in a certain light, I felt my cheeks heat a bit. He looked so hot and his personality was so charming. He offered me one, which I downed quickly. I had a high alcohol tolerance and didn't flinch one bit when I downed the shot. At this point, people started getting drunk left and right. Marker jumped on the table and started to dance. Foldy was on the ground laughing and Stapy was recording the whole thing. The entire party now smelled like a bar.

"Hey Tree, wanna play a game?" He found a beer bottle on the ground and showed it to me.

Knowing fully well what he was inferring, I said hell yeah and he laid the bottle on the ground. Since Black Hole was playing, Everyone joined in and we had the entire party playing Spin the Bottle. Black Hole spun first and the bottle landed on Fanny, then Bubble. What a coincidence. Fanny proceeded to kiss Bubble, who tried to get it over with as fast as she could. Fanny decided to spin it. The bottle spun for a long time and eventually landed on Black Hole. Now, everyone wanted the bottle to land on them. Fanny spun it again and it landed on... ME??? What was happening? Black Hole looked at me dead in the eyes with a slight smile.

"Tree, you can say no if you want to." He could tell I was blushing.

"No, I'll do it!" I tried to be nonchalant about it. It was happening, I would kiss the hottest guy I would ever meet.

I braced myself and I felt His lips touch mine. His lips felt so good, better than I expected. He kissed me only for about a couple of seconds and let go. My face went from slightly pink to dark crimson. I remember everything going black right after I kissed him.

I woke up outside of the party on the soft grass outside the party. When I woke up, I saw Black Hole, Pen, and all my friends surrounding me. Black Hole was followed by many others and he politely told them to leave him alone. Surprisingly, they obeyed since they too had crushes on him.

"Tree! You okay dude?" Blocky asked.

"Ughhh... yeah... what happened?" I asked as I got up from the ground feeling dizzy.

"You fainted when Black Hole kissed you when we played Spin the Bottle," Pen explained.

I now remembered what happened. My cheeks heated again and my face flushed. Black Hole saw this and put his arm around me.

"You're the same, funny guy I had always known!" Black Hole complimented me with a smile.

"Hehe! Thanks, dude! Sorry for making you carry me out and worry about me."

"Don't thank me, thank your main man Pen here for lifting you," Black Hole smiled and high-fived Pen.

I got up and walked back into the party to see everyone laughing at me. Even my friends Liy, Remote, Bottle, and the others were laughing. I laughed along with them, as the situation WAS pretty funny. We continued the game and many people got very uncomfortable matchups. Pen got matched up with Pencil, which was funny to me since Pencil seemed embarrassed about the whole thing. Everyone was having a blast. Blocky had to kiss Woody, who was super nervous about the whole thing, so Blocky only kissed him on the cheek to not pressure him. We proceeded to play until it was 10:00 at night. We decided to go home. Black Hole then asked if Pen and I wanted to go to the famous haunted house around here, which was close by. We both agreed and hopped into Black Hole's car.

"It is okay if my friends come too?" I asked, pointing to Liy and everyone else."

"I don't see why not!" He replied with a smile."

We got into his car and he safely drove us to the haunted house. Pie fell asleep in the car and Bottle giggled as she rarely saw Pie pass out from something as small as a Halloween party. We drove for about fifteen minutes and I started feeling woozy from all the alcohol I had

drank. Black Hole, despite having a couple of shots, drove perfectly and didn't seem like a drunk driver at all. We didn't chat much in the car, but it was amazing to see Black Hole again after so long, as he had been working overtime as a doctor these past couple of months.

We arrived at the haunted house and it didn't disappoint. The house itself looked abandoned, but many were lined up outside the house, waiting for the experience of a lifetime. We didn't have to wait long, only about a couple of minutes. All of us except Bottle entered the house, as she bailed on us since she was afraid of the dark. Right when we walked in, a guy in a bloodied clown costume popped out of the ceiling tile and jumped in front of us. I screamed like a siren and covered my eyes. Clowns were my worst fear, as I had been afraid of them for as long as I could remember. Everyone else got slightly spooked except Black Hole, who pretended to get scared for the sake of it. We proceeded through the house and saw everything. There was blood staining the walls, spider webs and live spiders everywhere, scary figures, and there was even an ouija board, which was a prop that only the bravest could play. Black Hole asked if we were up for it. Not wanting to sound like a chicken in front of my best friend, I reluctantly replied with a yes, along with everyone else in our group. We used the Ouija board and soon summoned a demon. The invisible force darted across the letters to spell B-E-H-I-N-D. We got spooked and instantly looked behind us. There was a shadowy figure darting across the walls. This figure started throwing objects at us and even scratched Remote. The people working at the haunted house also crept up behind us and scared us. All of us were so scared to the point we were crying our eyes out of fear. Even Pie was trembling in her boots. We ran through the rest of the house and ignored most of the scares. Black Hole led us through the house, as he claimed he had come here in the past. We made it out the other side of the door and saw Bottle driving the car. We all lay on the grass outside for a breather, as we witnessed the scariest experience of our lives. Bottle asked what happened, but all of us were too tired to explain the events that occurred. She sighed and we all got into Black Hole's car. Bottle offered to drive but Black Hole insisted. He drove us all back to our houses and dropped us all off one by one. Pen and I were last out of the car.

"Black Hole, you can come in if you like," Pen said, tiredly.

"Oh! If you'd like me to, I'll gladly come in."

"We'd love it if you stayed the night with us tonight!" I exclaimed, excited that this guy was going to spend the night with Pen and me.

We walked into the house and got on the couch. It was 11:00 pm and all of us except Black Hole were tired. He saw that we were tired and suggested we go to bed. We agreed and Pen and I went up the stairs and changed out of our costumes. The blood on my fangs was gone and my vampire costume was a bit dirty from all the activities I did tonight. Pen and I met outside the doors and went downstairs. We went to check on Black Hole and noticed he wasn't on the couch.

"Huh. Strange. I thought dude was gonna be on the couch since he was tired." Pen observed.

"I know, right," I solemnly replied.

We went to the kitchen and Black Hole popped out from behind a wall, scaring both of us. We both fell to the ground and heavily breathed. Black Hole smiled at us and helped us up, apologizing if he had scared us too badly. We followed him back to the couch and sat there for a bit.

"Sorry for scaring you two. I made you both fall on the floor!" Black Hole laughed.

"It's okay bro, it's Halloween after all. Tree and I were pretty dumb not to expect that." Pen replied.

I sat with him on the couch and admired his face. Once again, my cheeks started to heat up and Pen noticed. He stared at me with a confused expression and had the "Why are you blushing" look. I hid my face in a pillow, but that made Black Hole notice me. He laughed at this and Pen started laughing too,

"Tree, It's okay! You don't need to hide anything from me. I won't judge," Black Hole warmly smiled.

My face went crimson and I just blankly stared at Black Hole. I couldn't help it. He was so HOT. Pen slapped me to snap me out of

the trance I was in. Black Hole ignored it and started playing some games on his phone. The three of us talked for the next hour until it was midnight.

"Pen, wanna call it a night? It's super late and I'm dead from all the scares." I asked.

"Sure."

Black Hole saw we were leaving, so he left too. Before he left, he dapped up Pen and gave him a bro hug. He then did the same for me and hugged me. I felt a feeling I had never felt before for a very long time. Black Hole's cologne smelled so good and his hands were super warm, contrary to the cold, autumn night. I looked up at him and saw him smiling at me. He knew I was relishing this, so he continued. Pen watched, also smiling since he had never seen me act so differently. Black Hole finally let go and started walking out the front door.

"I think it's time I leave now." Black Hole somberly stated.

"Byee!" Pen and I said in sync while waving at him.

Black Hole left and we saw him put his hoodie on and get into his car. He slowly drove off and I watched him from a distance. I could never tell him that I had genuine feelings for him, but it was safe to say that he already knew I did and he played along.

Pen and I finally got changed into our pajamas and we headed off to bed. The day was over. I will always remember the experience of my crush hugging me and acknowledging that I had feelings for him. Pen grinned, knowing I loved Black Hole. He teased me for it and said he would tell everyone if I didn't do his laundry tomorrow. I rolled my eyes and pushed him.

"What? You always do that to me!"

We wished each other goodnight and I tucked myself into bed, staring up at the waxing crescent moon above as it shone through my bedroom window.

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OOOOO SPOOKY! Hope you guys enjoyed that chapter! I tried doing my very best on this one since this is a special. Anyway, thanks for making it to the end. Have an amazing Halloween if it's coming up or still going. If you've already had it, I hope you had fun. Catch you all later and stay awesome.

Chapter 10: Publishing 11/02/23

Chapter 9 - Pillow

It was a warm, Saturday morning in June. Once again, I woke up in my hotel bed. However, something seemed rather off. I noticed that Pie's sneakers, which are usually clean as a whistle, were tattered and had many scuffs of dirt and many rips in the seams. I also noticed there was a speck of blood on the sole of the left shoe.

"No, It couldn't be!" I thought to myself, not wanting to jump to conclusions.

I decided to ask her a bit later during breakfast, as both Pie and Bottle were still sound asleep. It was unordinary that Pie would sleep this late, as she was an early riser the majority of the time. In the meantime, I got on my phone and started looking at social media for about an hour.

Pie had woken up, and her movements woke Bottle too. Pie looked unwell. She had dark circles under her eyes and her auburn hair was extremely messy. I knew for a fact Pie had gone outside the hotel for the night since I had a vivid memory of her waking me up in the middle of the night. That bastard. I ordered the same breakfast for us and heard Pen ordering food for his hotel. Hanging up the phone, I checked my cell phone for any unread texts during the night. Bubble had texted me at 11:00 at night, asking how the trip was. She apologized that she couldn't make it and said she was feeling better. I smiled, knowing Bubble was much happier than before.

"Pie, can I ask you something?" I solemnly asked, hoping for an adequate answer.

"Yeah, what's up?" She replied, slightly more somber than usual.

"Mind explaining why your shoes are scuffed and there's a drop of blood on one? Also, where did you go last night?" I interrogated her unexpectedly.

Her eyes widened, as she didn't expect me to ask her on the spot.

"It's okay. I won't tell a soul." I tried to comfort her as best as I could, though this seemed to do nothing to her saddened mood.

"Can I tell you later or by text?" She asked.

"Ugh. Fine. Sure." I told her, slightly more annoyed.

"Thanks."

Now, I was more suspicious than ever. Usually, Pie doesn't hesitate to tell me some of the worst things she has done. Just like one time, Pie wrote obscenities on our high school's wall since the principal gave her a suspension for too many dress code violations. I could see why she was angry, as our school was extremely strict when it came to girls' dress code.

I soon forgot about it and proceeded to eat breakfast with my friends. Bottle was peppy and energetic like usual, but Pie seemed more gloomy and less interactive than before. What had happened that night?

Once we all had finished breakfast, we decided to do something different today. I texted the others that we should tour the city and visit all the cool attractions. They agreed and we decided to leave at about 10:00 in the morning. We departed shortly after finishing breakfast, which was extremely pleasant since there wasn't a shortage of chefs at the hotel today. On top of all this, the food came quicker, meaning we could leave earlier and check the city out more. I went into the bathroom and got ready. Bottle joined me once I was almost done putting my makeup on. I went outside to see Pie with a mischievous smirk on her face. She told me she was going to prank Liy for the prank call she had made to her a couple of days prior. She was going to set up an elaborate trap next to the hotel door. She first texted Tree and the others (besides Liy) privately. She informed them about the prank, to which they all agreed to join in. Pie snuck out of the room and tied some old fishing line she found at the bottom of her suitcase to the sides of the door. She made sure to place it at about shin level so Liy would be more likely to fall over. After setting up the tripwire, I made sure we were all ready to hit the road. We

exited the hotel and knocked on the others' door. There, Liy initially opened it and you know what happened next. I playfully rolled my eyes as Liy tripped over the tightrope. Pie pretended it wasn't her, but you didn't need half a brain to figure out she was the culprit, as she had an ulterior motive behind the prank. Liy fell to the ground, landing on her stomach. She angrily looked up at Pie whistling on her phone.

"Oh! Are you okay Liy?" Pie sarcastically asked. She let out a chuckle, which deceived her instantly.

"Lemme guess, this is for the prank call, huh?" Liy asked with a frowned expression.

"No! No! Why would I do that girl?" Pie wittily remarked.

Liy got up and brushed herself off. She hadn't noticed that the cologne in her pocket exploded, staining her pants. Pie saw this but didn't tell her, as a tripwire alone wouldn't make up for the devious prank Liy had done.

"First of all, it was a dare by Pen. Second of all, you accomplished absolutely nothing with this lame excuse for a prank." Liy angrily shuttered.

"Sounds like someone's mad."

"SHUT THE FUCK UP."

Upon raging, Liy noticed her exploded bottle of cologne in her pocket. She flipped out and started telling Pie she went too far for ruining her favorite pants. The two exchanged words for about ten seconds before it got out of hand. Liy started walking to Pie, but we all took action.

Remote stepped between the two and separated Liy from Pie, as she didn't want her new mate to have any conflict. She grabbed Liy and dragged her away from Pie. Pie continued to laugh, telling her to think about who she decided to prank next. Liy calmed down after about a minute and stopped snapping at Pie. We now continued the walk around the city.

We walked for about 15 minutes and came across a small area with multiple French attractions. There was a building called The French Quarter. We decided to check it out, as the exterior of the building looked promising. According to some sources, this was the oldest neighborhood in New Orleans. The architecture looked stunning, like something you would find in the early 1700s. Liy snapped some photos of the buildings to post on social media.

"Hah, history nerd," Pie muttered, laughing to herself.

Remote glared at her with an enraged expression. She didn't appreciate that Pie was picking on her newfound girlfriend. Pie smirked back and kept walking. It was a good thing Pie didn't share a room with them. Things would erupt into chaos if they had. We proceeded to tour the city for a couple of hours until we were feeling hungry. Pie suggested we eat at the nearby restaurant, Central Grocery, which was one of the most iconic restaurants the area had to offer. Liy rolled her eyes and frowned, but still agreed with her, as the scent coming from the place was enough for anyone to step foot through those saloon doors.

"Howdy, y'all! What can I get for ya folks?" The cashier greeted us.

"Hello. Can we all get the most famous sandwiches you have here?" Pie casually asked.

"Sure thing! Seven sandwiches coming on up!"

"Hey, quick question, how in the world did you know to get us exactly seven?" Pie asked.

"Uhh, I have eyes, I can see there are indeed seven people accompanying you." The cashier said with a deadpan expression, staring at Pie with a "what are you thinking" face.

Liy and Remote started laughing and the cashier smirked too. She went to take the next customer.

"Shut up you two." Pie sarcastically smiled, trying to hide her anger.

I found us a large table at the back of the restaurant and got us some

drinks. Pen helped too, as he felt bad if he made me do all the work. Tree snuck some soda into his water cup and Pen silently chuckled at him.

"Pen, can you donate me some of your strength?" I jokingly asked as he held five cups at once.

"Hah, If I was able to, I would do it in a snap," He replied. He patted me on the head and left for the table.

"Pillow, Pen may be strong physically, but what he has in brawns, he lacks in brains." Tree cut in.

"Not true Tree! You can't talk since you're a school nerd." Pen loudly replied gleefully, smiling ear to ear.

Pen ruffled Tree's hair and sat down next to him. We all talked about the most random stuff you could think of. The usual "senior" talk. Pen played games on his phone while we waited for the food. I wasn't surprised that the food was taking a bit long since the line to the restaurant was out the door now. Our food eventually arrived and we ate. Pie got up to use the restroom since she hadn't gone before we went out. Meanwhile, Liy snuck a bite of her sandwich, as she claimed she was "dying of hunger." Remote giggled and punched Liy in the arm playfully, telling her off for being greedy. Pie came back and asked who took a bite of her sandwich. Liy and Remote both blamed Pen, who had his earbuds in and was listening to an audiobook. Surprisingly, Pie believed them and glared at Pen.

"Hey, Pi- Wait... why do you look like you want to kill me?" Pen asked with slight confusion.

"You ate some of my sandwich, didn't you?" Pie blankly stared at Pen.

"Uhh no? Why would I?" Pen asked, now very confused. "I was listening to my audiobook minding my business."

Oh gosh, Pie was going to flip out. She was already in a tense mood since the morning, especially because she was on bad terms with Liy and Remote. I braced for impact and pretended not to listen, looking down at the floor. I was relieved that Pie shrugged and told Pen he

needed to gain some weight anyway.

"What the fuck?" I asked myself, not knowing why Pie didn't rage on Pen right there on the spot.

We continued eating and eventually left the establishment. Liy and Pie kept glaring at each other, but everyone else didn't care, as we thought they were acting rather childish for their age. We decided to go on a cruise, as we hadn't done so yet and that was one of the biggest attractions you could find in New Orleans. I searched my phone and found the nicest cruise possible. The only problem was that it was a 15-minute walk, which would mean we would have to walk about 30 minutes back to our hotel when we wanted to end our tour. Everyone agreed, since this cruise was rumored to be the best money could buy.

Midway through the walk, Bottle complained about her legs being sore. Tree looked at her deadpan and told her he broke his foot not too long ago and he could walk just fine.

"Aww but my feet are killing me!" Bottle whined.

"What do you want us to do?" Tree laughed.

That's when we got a radical idea. Pen was the strongest here and he could piggyback her to the destination, which was now only about ten minutes away from us. Pen agreed since he said he was skipping his gym days and needed some way to work out. Bottle happily thanked Pen and she hopped on his back. Bottle was very light so Pen didn't mind at all. He compared her to a weight plate he would put on the bench press bar at the gym. Pie giggled at this and told Bottle she looked much shorter being on Pen's back.

Pen's lower back got tired and he told Bottle to get on his shoulders.

"WOOOOW! I feel so tall!" Bottle cutely laughed.

"Now you know what it feels like to be yours truly," Pen replied, pointing his thumb at himself.

"Heh, you wish you were that tall." Tree snidely replied with a smirk.

"Tree, I don't wanna hear it. It's ironic you're saying I wish I was taller when I could probably jump over you."

"Wanna bet?" Tree laughed.

"Not now, we're almost at the cruise."

We got in line for the cruise. Pen let Bottle down from his shoulders. Bottle thanked Pen and gave him a gentle hug. Pen smiled and insisted that it was no big deal. It wasn't long until we boarded the cruise and the ship started to move. Remote had a panicked look in her eyes, as she was scared of the ocean, specifically water. Liy comforted her and assured her they could stay inside the ship. Remote nodded and Liy helped her into the indoor area of the ship. The rest of us stayed on the top where we could see the ocean staring back at us with a wistful glimmer. Tree snapped some cool photos of the city and ocean, and Pen had to hold him up so Tree could get the perfect, "social media worthy" shot. Tree sent the photos to all of us, as we figured it would be easier if only one person took the photos.

I walked down the stairs to check up on Remote and Liy. Since Remote was seasick, the attendants brought out a bag for her to use. Liy looked worried and had her arm around Remote's shoulder.

"Hey, is everything okay? Do you guys need anything?"

"Yep, everything's fine, Remote's just a little sick, that's all." Liy warmly smiled at me.

"Are you guys sure you don't need anything?" I asked once again.

"Fine fine, can you order me an iced coffee and Remote a cup of water?" Liy asked nicely.

"Of course! Coming this way." I went over to order the requested items.

I brought the items to Liy and Remote. It was apparent that Remote was feeling much better, as she didn't need the bag or Liy to support her. I gave them their drinks and Liy looked at me with some sweat running down her face. I could tell she wanted to tell me something.

"I know you wanna tell me something. What's up? I asked politely, not being too pushy.

"You read my mind, I wanna tell you a little secret. But you have to promise not to tell our other friends." Liy explained.

I listened and Liy told me that Remote and herself were in a platonic relationship with each other. I nodded and congratulated them. Remote warmly smiled at me, which made Liy blush a bit.

"You know Pillow, you're a great friend." Liy opened up.

I thanked her and told her it was nothing, as I was just being myself. She hugged me and Remote cried a little.

"Guys, I'm going to go check out more of the scenery up there if you guys are fine with that." I motioned.

"Send me some pictures while you're up there!" Liy voiced.

I went back up and the others asked where I had been. I told them that I was in the bathroom and the toilet had clogged. Pen and Pie laughed, and Tree punched both of their shoulders, telling them to grow up. Bottle started to laugh too.

"Oh, c'mon. Not you too." Tree spoke with a blank expression.

The cruise ended. We all got off the boat and Remote still looked a little woozy.

"Hey Remote, are you okay?" Pie asked with caution. She knew she and Liy were on bad terms with her.

"Yeah, I'm fine, thanks for asking." Remote hoarsely said with a small smile.

Lucky for us, the cruise stopped at a different dock which was right next to our hotel. Remote got over her seasickness quickly and we walked back to the hotel.

"That was surely an experience.," Tree stated.

"What else would it be? A sitcom?" Pen teased.

"Typical Pen, being the low IQ individual of the group." Tree teased back.

"Take that back right now Tree."

"No, I don't think I will haha."

Pen slapped Tree on the behind shortly after Tree had dissed him.

"Ouch! Why did you do that!" Tree complained.

"Why not." Pen smugly replied.

Tree and Pen began pushing each other, acting like brothers who didn't get along. We continued walking and pretended we didn't know them, as they were embarrassing us. We eventually made it back to the hotel and took the elevator, since it was now fixed. Liy insisted she takes the stairs and Remote asked if she could come with. Liy said she could go in the elevator, so she went with us. It wasn't long until all six of us got to our rooms. Liy shortly followed panting, as she sprinted up the stairs so she could make it to the room without having to knock.

"Why were you running? There was no rush." Pie asked.

"Got a problem?" Liy asked, panting between words.

"Geez, I'm asking a simple question." Pie rolled her eyes.

We went inside our respective rooms and Pie instantly collapsed onto the bed, with Bottle following shortly after.

"Why so tired?" I laughed.

"Shut up Pillow. You have good genetics unlike us." Bottle sarcastically remarked.

I laughed as I went to the bathroom to shower. I quickly finished up and got on my phone and started texting the others. The day went on as normal from here. We ordered food from room service and I

chatted with my friends. We also had a mini pillow fight since there was nothing else to do. Pie was crowned the ultimate victor, as she didn't hold back and destroyed Bottle and me.

That night, Pie and Bottle decided to stay up late and play some games on the television. I just wanted some sleep gosh dammit. I put my headphones in and drifted off to sleep that night. I could hear Bottle and Pie gaming through my noise-canceling earbuds, but I didn't really mind, as I was used to their loud antics. I had been to their house many times and they always did this. I was initially surprised they didn't do this the entire trip so far.

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Another day, another chapter. Currently, I have chapter 10 pre-written, but I proofread my stories before publishing to ensure you guys can understand my stories and enjoy them to their full potential. Byee!

Chapter 10: Publishing 11/02/23

Chapter 10 - Pie

Today was the day my friends and I would depart back home. Going home was a bittersweet moment. I wanted to leave since I didn't have to put up with that idiot Liy's bullshit and Remote trying to defend her, acting as if she's done nothing wrong. Gosh, they were both so annoying. However, I loved spending time with my childhood friends and we went on so many adventures this trip.

I woke up and immediately started packing my things, as Pillow's butler would arrive in our limo at 10:00 in the morning. Why would Pillow book so early in the morning? I understand she's an early riser but dang girl! 10:00 am is early for lots of people! Bottle followed soon after, packing her things too. I headed out the door to wait outside. We skipped breakfast that day since we figured we could eat back at home. I walked outside the door and guess who was standing there? That bitch Liy was right outside her door too. Remote wasn't there, but if she was, she would've left because of the high tensions between us.

"Pie." Lily glared at me and gritted her teeth.

I rolled my eyes and walked over to her.

"Morning Liy. What do you want?" I asked.

"Nothing. Just waiting outside."

We stared at each other for what felt like an eternity. Liy walked back into her room after 30 seconds and I did the same, as it would be weird for me to be the only one standing outside the door. I pulled out my phone and sat on the bed, watching Pillow pack her things. That's when I got a notification on the top of my phone. I read it and I visibly got angry. Liy had texted me. I checked my phone to see she ghost-pinged me. I angrily hopped on the private text thread and started typing away.

Pie: Why'd you text me and delete the message?

Liy: Sorry, it was a misclick

Pie: Ok

Pie: Anyways, can I talk to you about something real quick?

Liy: Umm sure ig?

Pie: I'm sorry for being such a bitch to you and Remote. I was thinking about the way I had been treating you and Remote for the majority of this trip and realized how bad of a person I was. It's cool if you don't forgive me and all but I just wanna let you know I'm sorry for being such a problem.

Liy: Pie! You weren't a problem at all! I was thinking about the same thing and thought I was being overly resentful towards you. I talked with Remote about it and she explained that I should talk it out with you lol. For your apology? I forgive you. It takes a real friend to apologize to someone like this.

Pie: Thank you Liy. I promise I won't be "that girl" in the friend group anymore 😬

Liy: Honestly, I'm proud of you for apologizing, as I was going to be the one to make the first move, not expecting you to. For that, I'm grateful already. <3

Pie: Still friends?

Liy: Still friends.

My heart warmed and I started to cry. I wasn't used to sending messages like this one, as I was known as the "badass one" in the group. Pillow noticed me crying and I instantly stopped, insisting I was watching a movie. She wiped my tears and continued packing, shrugging her shoulders as she walked away. She was almost finished, but according to Liy, Tree couldn't find his phone and he was freaking out about it. Liy and I continued to chat via text for the next 15 minutes until Tree found his phone.

I walked out of the hotel room and saw Liy and Remote walk out too. Liy smiled at me and waved hi. I smiled back and gave her the same energy back. Remote had a confused look on her face, as she didn't know the text conversation Liy and I had. Remote whispered in Liy's ear. I knew she was asking why Liy was being nice to me all of a sudden. Liy probably explained it since Remote left her alone and nodded her head after she was done explaining what had happened.

Tree, being the last one to get his things together, finally found his phone. As a result, we all left the hotel immediately, as Pillow's limo was waiting outside for us. I felt spoiled driving in this thing since I was used to growing up without any money on the table for food, let alone traveling. We hopped into the car and started driving back. As of now, I contemplated what I would do for the next five hours in the car with these guys. I decided to start a convo with Pillow and Bottle, as they were my closest friends on this vacation. We talked for a long time until Liy pulled out a deck of cards. We decided to play a couple of games of Poker, as each game lasted for about an hour if you played correctly.

Liy gave the cards to me to shuffle, as I had experience with shuffling cards. I developed the skill back when I was much younger. My dad would bring me to the casinos and he taught me how to gamble and shuffle cards. Everyone else knew I was extremely experienced when it came to playing casino games. I dealt everyone two cards and looked at my cards. I was astounded to see that I started with an ace and a king. I was feeling super lucky today. I kept a poker face, as I didn't want my friends to know that I had one of the best hands you could have in the game of Poker. We proceeded to play for an hour. Of course, I ended with the best handout of everyone by the end. The others didn't have a good poker face, as they had little to no experience with the game, although they knew the basic rules.

We eventually got bored of playing and collectively decided to sleep in the car. Everyone was tired from the car ride, as motion drowsiness set in. Pen lay on the floor with Tree right next to him. Remote lay on one of the long chairs. Liy saw this and snapped a couple of photos before taking a nap next to the car wall by herself. I decided I wasn't weak and would stay up while everyone was sleeping. It wasn't easy since Pillow was resting her head on me. I

tried to stay awake for as long as possible, doing everything I possibly could to stay awake. This didn't last long, as after about half an hour, I gave in to my drowsiness and fell asleep.

For the time being, I don't recall anything else about the car ride. I woke up to see Bottle shaking me.

"Ugh Bottle, what do you want now?" I asked, dazed from just waking up.

"We're back at the house silly!" Bottle excitedly kept shaking me."

"Okay, Okay. Just stop shaking me, I'm up," I chuckled.

Bottle and I went back to Pillow's garage and picked up our car. Bottle and I got in and started driving back home. Before leaving, we thanked Pillow for everything and Bottle asked if we could do something like this again. Oh, brother. I was already exhausted from one quick road trip. Imagine going on another one again!

The car ride was silent on my part, with Bottle, being the talkative friend she was, telling me a bunch of useless information that I could care less about. I felt my eyes getting heavy, despite taking an extremely long nap only a couple of minutes before. The night sky was glistening like a new piece of jewelry you would find at high-end jewelry establishments. Bottle looked up and admired the beautiful night sky. The moonlight reflected off the car like a solar panel, partially blinding my vision. I couldn't care less about this, as I was super tired and just wanted to get home as soon as I could.

We arrived home after about 15 minutes of driving. Bottle and I got out and rang the doorbell. My parents answered and invited me in. I put all my stuff down and went straight upstairs to my room. I fainted on the bed and had my face smothered in my pillow. Bottle noticed I was much more tired than usual.

"Hey Pie! You okay?" She worriedly asked.

"I'm fine, Bottle. I'm just a little tired, that's all." I smiled at her.

She felt my forehead. Once she felt it, she instantly got my

thermometer.

"Stick this under your tongue. You might have a fever judging by the unusual heat of your forehead."

I compiled, knowing Bottle was worrying about me. She pulled the thermometer out and the temperature read 101 degrees Fahrenheit. It was at this moment I noticed I was sick. Bottle ran down and told my parents, who rushed up to see if I was sick. My dad did an oxygen test on me, which showed that I had low amounts of oxygen in my bloodstream. My parents thanked Bottle for telling them, and my dad told me that If I start feeling any worse, call them. According to the web, There was a chance that I had a sickness called Hypoxemia, which is a sickness where the amount of oxygen in your blood is too low, which is why my parents were so worried about me.

Bottle sat by the bed, watching me. My sickness got worse and I started to have a splitting headache and my breath was shortening. These were two common signs of Hypoxemia. I lay down and started texting my friends. Surprisingly, no one was online. I sighed to myself and kept spam-pinging people to get online, as I couldn't do anything else but go on my phone.

"Pie, would you like me to get you anything girl?" Bottle asked.

"Sure. Just a cup of water would suffice for now." I said in a hoarse voice. It was clear my sickness was getting worse and worse by the minute.

I drank a cup of water and started sweating. Now, I felt like I was going to die. I told Bottle to tell my parents to call the ER, as I needed immediate care. My heart was beating slower and I started losing my focus. Bottle worriedly sat by the side of the bed, crying. I wish I could tell her I'd be okay, but I was too weak to speak or get up. I could feel my life slowly slipping away if the paramedics didn't arrive soon.

Eventually, an ambulance parked itself on the curb. Two women got out of the van and ran inside with supplies. They rushed to my room and sprung into action very quickly. One of them injected fluid into my arm to stop some of the symptoms and get my heart to pump

faster, forcing blood to move throughout my body. The other held an oxygen mask and told me to put it on. They turned on the oxygen and after breathing a couple of puffs, I instantly started feeling better. My headache disappeared and my throat cleared up. I sat with an oxygen mask on for about half an hour. Bottle and my parents watched them do their job and Bottle looked super worried. My parents hugged her, reassuring her that I would be okay, as I was extremely strong.

Eventually, I got better and the paramedics ran a couple of last-minute tests on me. They checked my oxygen levels with a specialized device. It showed on the screen that my oxygen levels were healthy and back to normal. One of them gave me an ice pack for my feverish head. They left and left a couple of syringes of fluid for me to inject if my heart started to slowly beat again. The ladies left, telling my parents they didn't have to thank them, as they were just doing their jobs.

Soon, my fever was gone and I felt normal. Bottle, still crying, hugged me, relieved that I was okay. I hugged her back and told her I was always okay, just not acting like it. Bottle side-eyed me and called "cap" on it. I cackled at this statement since Bottle didn't usually use slang. She still asked if I needed anything, and I told her that wouldn't be necessary. She proceeded to walk out of the room, as she figured I needed some alone time. She was right. The past three days included my friends always being around me no matter what. Although I thoroughly enjoyed my friends' company, everyone needs some alone time. I closed my eyes and finally fell asleep. Bottle creaked the door open and fell asleep on my couch in my room. I saw her and I thought to myself, "Do I deserve friends like this, despite how much of a nuisance I could be at times?" I finally drifted off to sleep, listening to my favorite songs through my earbuds. The past week has been the most eventful week I have ever lived. It felt like there was some sort of curse looming over me everywhere I went. What do I know though? I'm probably just imagining things like usual.

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It's a new month! As of now, I've got more time on my hands, meaning I'll be writing more chapters. However, I'll still post them

every two days to keep you guys on edge haha. Hope you guys enjoyed that chapter! Once again, please tell me anything I can improve, as my writing is FAR from perfect. Have an amazing day/ night you guys!

Chapter 11: Publishing 11/04/23

Chapter 11 - Tree

Less than a week until our official graduation ceremony. It was finally almost here. The long, tedious journey of grade school was almost over. Today was a Monday. I groaned, not wanting to wake up on a weekday. I rubbed my eyes and went back to sleep, despite there being school today. Usually, I set three alarms in the morning, waking up on the third one. Today, I only set one since I was lazy yesterday and was busy on a trip with friends. It was currently 6:00 am and school started at 8. I finally got the energy to pull myself out of bed and get ready for the day. I slipped on my favorite pair of clothes and got ready in the bathroom. It felt good to finally be back in my own home. Although the three days of vacation I had was fun, I still needed some quiet time to myself. I washed my face and sat on my bed for a couple of minutes, thinking about what I would do today at school.

Pen was downstairs working out. He spent all of the money he earned from his part-time job on training devices and weights. When I went downstairs, it smelled like the inside of a sauna. The air was humid and the humidity made the temperature around me rise. Pen had his earbuds in, so he couldn't hear me. I walked by and made myself some breakfast. An omelet sounded good today. I whipped up my breakfast and ate alone at the table. Since no one was on text in the morning, I was rather bored eating alone. Usually, on weekdays, Pen would work out first thing in the morning, as it was his hobby and he didn't feel the need to do it on weekends. I was in the middle of eating my food when I heard Pen call me. He asked if I could get him a protein shake from the fridge. I thought if I should be a good friend and make it for him, or if I should be mean to him since he did this exact thing to me multiple times. I knew Pen would get payback if I didn't do it, so I made it for him. I had dark circles under my eyes due to the lack of sleep I got last night. I walked over to Pen, who was sweating up an ocean. I proceeded to give him the protein shake, as he WAS my best friend and roommate after all.

"Thank you, Tree! You're my dude!" Pen told me with a kindhearted smile.

"No problemo," I smirked at him before walking away to finish my breakfast.

The rest of the morning went by like normal. I finished my breakfast and cleaned the kitchen since I had nothing better to do. I checked my watch and noticed it was time for school. I went upstairs, brushed my teeth, and washed my hair. Pen was already outside waiting for me. That guy was so lucky! He didn't have to style his hair since it was much shorter and his sweat didn't smell at all so he didn't even bother washing up. Although Pen's a night owl and a late riser on the weekends, he's the exact opposite on the weekdays, sometimes waking up at 4 in the morning to work out. I suspected that he worked out to either impress his bros or to impress girls at school. Either way, I thought he was rather humorous for doing so.

Pen offered to drive today, as I had been driving for the past week. Pen was a jerky driver, never having a steady foot on the pedal. He would also occasionally make extremely sharp turns on the road, as he was afraid he would crash into the cars in front of him. I didn't mind this, as Pen was still a good driver, as he had never gotten into an accident in his life.

"You ready for the last week of school, Tree?" Pen asked while driving.

"I'm exhausted from school, but knowing it's the last week, I'm pretty pumped," I replied.

"Same here bro. Since it's the last week, I'm planning to go all out." Pen excitedly remarked.

"What does that mean?" I questioned.

"You'll find out ya idiot."

We talked for the rest of the ride about usual things like girls, mean teachers, annoying people, etc.

Pen eventually pulled into the school's parking lot. There, Pen's

friends were waiting for him.

"Morning Pen!" Eraser remarked. His monotone voice could be easily recognizable from anywhere.

"Wassup Eraser!" Pen excitedly called out, eager to see his childhood friends.

Blocky lay against the wall, smoking a cigarette. He smashed the end on the wall and threw the cigarette butt into a trash can. He gave me a fist bump and greeted me outside the school. I knew Eraser and Blocky reasonably well, as they would often come over to hang out with Pen. I eventually got tight with them and started hanging out with them not too long ago.

Five minutes until our classes started. During the day, everyone had six periods. There were seven-period slots for every student, so everyone had something called a "free period". My free period was the seventh period, meaning I could go home before Pen every day. Luckily for me, I had my first period with lots of my friends. Pen, Snowball, and Bottle were all in my class, which was Science.

The classroom atmosphere was always super quiet. Our teacher always commented on how silent our class was, despite Pen and Snowball being in our class. We were all silent since it was the morning and being seniors, none of us got good sleep at all.

All of us were shocked to hear that we had a final tomorrow. Luckily, our teacher was nice and our science final was rather easy, mostly multiple-choice with one free-response question. She passed out study guides and gave us some possible prompts for the free-response question. I was one of the smartest kids in the class, so it wasn't rare that someone would ask me for help, sometimes being a tutor. I wasn't surprised when Pen and Snowball both asked me for help. Pen wasn't the sharpest tool in the shed, having an 84% in the class. He asked for some help and I gladly helped him study. He was extremely shaky on most concepts and worried he would fail the final. I reassured him that the final would be super easy. The only reason Pen was stressed was because the test was worth 30% of our final grade, meaning if we did badly, our grade would fall tremendously. For the rest of the period, our teacher gave us time to study for the

final tomorrow. Although I didn't like Snowball much, I still helped him since he needed it too.

The bell rang and everyone exited the class to go to the second period. I took AP computer science for my second period. The class went by as any normal day would. There was only one thing in particular I disliked about this class. This was because Leafy was my desk partner. Leafy wasn't too much of a nuisance, but her personality was like a loose cannon. She could be "fake nice" at one point and objective and rude at another. Although I disliked this to some extent, the class wasn't the worst. The professor, Professor Six, was energetic and nice most of the time. However, they would tell Leafy off a lot whenever she talked out of turn, which I found rather amusing.

It was now Brunch. I gathered at "the spot" next to the football field. My friends and I would always meet there. Once I arrived, I saw Pen and the others sitting on the bleachers. Liy complained that school sucked and that the teachers even made the last week of school boring. We all agreed since none of our classes had anything fun to do. We played games with each other on our phones and showed each other funny memes for the rest of brunch. The time went by much faster than I had anticipated. "Was it just me or does recess seem ten thousand times faster than classes?" I asked myself, not knowing the answer.

The next two classes were my least favorite by far. Literature and AP Physics. AP Physics has the same rules as AP computer science, boosting my grades. In both of my classes, I had some of the most annoying kids. In literature, I had Fanny sit on my left and Flower sit on my right. Both of them were kiss-ups to the teacher and always talked about random stuff. They were both extremely annoying and my time in that class felt like hell on earth. I mainly slept through that class, as the work was extremely easy and we didn't have a literature final.

Things soon changed in AP Physics. I had all the nerds in my class. Golf Ball and Tennis Ball were both in the front. I sat in the middle row. The only good part about this class was the fact that I sat next to Black Hole, one of my childhood besties. He would always bless me with the homework answers and sometimes teach me Physics to

ensure I understood everything. Black Hole was the smartest kid in the school, having a jaw-dropping 5.0 GPA. He would always spend his time in the library studying and reading books. I tried to get him to hang out during our breaks, but he refused, as he worried he would do badly on something at school. Although he was a nerd, he was extremely nice and caring. He had one of the best personalities you could think of. To top it all off, he was extremely handsome. Despite these qualities, he never tried being popular. The class was a breeze if you sat next to him. Because of him, I had a good grade in the class.

Lunch was always my favorite part of the day. Throughout the year, I noticed the cafeteria was divided into sections. Popular girls like Fanny, Flower, Pencil, Match, etc would sit in the back of the building. Jocks like Snowball would sit right next to their table, the edgy kids next to them, the semi-popular kids next, and the nerds would sit in the front of the cafeteria. I would usually join Pen at the jock's table, despite being unathletic and a huge nerd myself. For the rest of lunch, Pen and I would talk with his friends about sports and games. They would also ask me for homework answers often, as they were dependent on me. The majority of the time, I gladly gave it, as I knew that they would change some answers to make it seem like it was their work. Sometimes, Blocky would bring his gaming system and a couple of controllers so we could play video games the whole time. Today was one of those days. I wasn't particularly good at games, but I was good enough to put up a fight against some of my friends. We gamed for the rest of lunch and had lots of fun doing so.

My ending periods were chill for the most part. Math was easy for me and PE was even easier. Despite me not being athletic, all you needed to do in PE was try. My PE class was the most enjoyable out of all my classes in my opinion. I had every single one of my friends in my period. Pen, Remote, Liy, Bottle, Black Hole, Pie, Pillow, Blocky, and Eraser were all in this class. After changing out of my clothes, I went outside and we walked over to the field. Since it was the end of the year, we played football for the remainder of the period. I wasn't fast and I couldn't catch, but I could throw like there was no tomorrow. I kept throwing to Black Hole, as he was the fastest in our period, and kept blowing by Blocky, who was getting increasingly more mad at Black Hole for simply being too good. I laughed at this and kept

doing it until every defender was guarding him. Football was entertaining, as everyone had some skill at something. We also had many players on the field, as football was our school's main sport. We had won the varsity championship three times in a row these past years.

Since I got to go home early, I teased Pen as I walked out of the school. Eraser also left early, so he drove me back home. Eraser and I got along surprisingly well, despite having two completely different personalities. Although he would call me "nerd" or "smartass", I liked his humor and he was extremely funny. He always told me stories about Blocky and Pen being idiots, which I found extremely entertaining. I would return the favor by telling him what Pen does at the house. I wasn't surprised if Eraser told me he already knew Pen was like that, as he and Pen had known each other longer than I had known Pen.

"So, what are your plans for the last week of school?" Eraser asked, eager to know.

"Hmm, I don't know. I'm probably just going to hang out with friends and study for finals." I answered.

"That's cool. I heard there's going to be a giant party after the ceremony. Wanna come with?" Eraser stared at me with his usual deadpan expression.

"I've got nothing else to do, so I guess," I told him. "For now, I'll probably just study relentlessly."

"Hm, Maybe I should study too, as my grades aren't the best and the finals could boost them." Eraser pondered.

"I'd say that's a great idea since I could help you study for upcoming exams," I eagerly told him, as I always liked helping others with school.

He smiled at me for the first time today. We both walked inside the house and Eraser unlocked the door.

"Hold on a minute. How did you get the keys to our house?" I asked

with a raised brow.

"Pen gave me a copy of your keys haha." Eraser sarcastically remarked.

"So you can just break into our house anytime you want?" I questioned.

"I could, but I won't since I surprisingly have good morals." Eraser chuckled.

Eraser and I walked inside and set our backpacks next to the table in the living room. By now, Eraser was used to coming over to our house, as Pen loved inviting friends over no matter the occasion.

"Wanna study in Pen's room? He has a bigger desk than this." I informed.

"If Pen's cool with it, I'm down." Eraser boldly smiled.

"Pen's fine with anything," I told him, rolling my eyes.

"Yeah yeah, cut the sass Tree. I was going to barge in there anyways." Eraser advised, deadpan.

I chuckled at this and we both walked up the stairs into Pen's room. Pen's room was rather messy today, as it had been a while since he had last cleaned his room. There were multiple shirts and pairs of underwear scattered throughout the room. About six water bottles lay on the floor next to his bed, and for some reason, his dumbbells were on his pillow. Eraser and I cleared some space from Pen's desk. We started studying, mainly mathematics, as Eraser wanted to get a good score on that final the most. We studied for about thirty minutes. Eraser eventually fell asleep on the desk. Not wanting to wake him, I continued studying for my classes until I heard the front door open. Pen was home.

"Tree! I'm home," Pen projected from down the stairs.

"Hey Pen!" I eagerly replied as I missed his presence while I was at the house.

Pen walked up the stairs and asked what I was up to. Once he walked in, he saw Eraser sleeping at his desk.

"What's Eraser doing here?" Pen asked, slightly confused.

"Oh, He needed help with studying so I helped him a bit. You're okay with us in your room right?" I explained.

"I'm completely fine with it, on one condition. No looking at my messages on my computer."

"Pssh, Why would I even check your computer Pen? I have no interest in that stuff." I laughed at him.

Pen shrugged his shoulders and went back downstairs to do his homework. Eraser eventually woke up only because I woke him up on purpose. For the rest of the day, I studied with Eraser until he decided to go at about 7:00 pm.

I followed up with Pen and asked him how school was.

"Ehh, School was pretty boring. It's the last week of school goddammit. Why can't our teachers be at least a little more fun instead of giving us last-minute lessons?" Pen bantered.

"I agree dude. They're making it seem like our last week of school means nothing." I shrugged my shoulders.

"Yeah! Did you know Professor X gave us a ten-page homework assignment?" Pen glared.

"Ugh, I hate that guy. He's so annoying and tiring to listen to!"

"You say that as if he's the worst Professor of all time. I'd say he's just trying to look out for your future and keep you sharp on your skills." I replied, trying to make Pen chill a bit.

"Nonsense. I'm glad I'm going to be completely done with school."

We ate supper at the table together and talked about more usual, senior things. Pen told me about his crushes at school, which I vowed not to tell anyone. Pen usually didn't have any crushes, so this news

was rather surprising, to say the least. As of now, I pondered on what my last week of school would be like.

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Okay, I didn't proofread this chapter since I was in a rush to post this, as I'm currently busy again haha. Please do inform me of any spelling, grammar, or readability mistakes so I can fix them. Thanks for reading this chapter! Yeah I know, this is a filler chapter. Hey, it's gotta be done lol.

Chapter 12: Publishing 10/05/23

Chapter 12 - Pen

"Pen, wake up ya fool. It's almost time for school," Tree nudged.

"Ughh- Is it already morning?" I groaned, not wanting to engage in a conversation upon being awakened.

"Yeah, it's morning." Tree nudged me again, this time harder.

"Okay okay, I'll get up, just wait for me by the front door. I'll be there."

I got up and quickly got ready for another day of school. Tired, I brushed my hair and brushed my teeth. I accidentally spilled some water on my clothes, but I couldn't care less, as my tanktop was waterproof and I would be wearing a hoodie over it anyways.

"Pen! Hurry your ass up! We'll be late!" Tree called from down the stairs.

"Be patient! I'm coming now!" I called back, slightly annoyed by Tree's haste to get out the door.

I dashed down the stairs, put on my shoes, and slipped my hoodie and backpack on. Tree ushered me out the door and we drove to school again. Tree drive today, driving more than ten miles over the speed limit consistently on the way there.

We arrived fifteen minutes early. I was angry at Tree for rushing me for no reason. He always did that no matter what day it was. I was happy the year was coming to a close so I wouldn't have to put up with it anymore.

I walked into the main building to see my friend Blocky shoving someone inside a locker. The boy was much smaller than Blocky. He had a brown button-down shirt and beige skinny jeans.

"Blocky! What are you doing?" I asked, wanting to know why he was shoving someone inside a locker.

"None of your business Pen, this guy's been getting on my nerves the whole year, and now's the perfect time to punish him," Blocky smirked at me, showing his sharp teeth.

Normally, I would brush this off and continue with my day, but I felt like it was wrong to do what Blocky was doing.

"Why are you shoving Woody inside a locker? He did nothing to you!" I spoke with a large frown.

"Shut the fuck up Pen. Let me do what I wanna do." Blocky talked back.

That was the last straw. I got the courage to push Blocky aside and open the locker. Woody lunged out and started sprinting out of the school, crying.

"What was that for?" Blocky asked, confused as to why I would stop him from picking on someone.

"It's the end of the year dumbass. Grow up, man." I swiftly commented.

"Whatever, way to kill the fun." Blocky groaned, walking away in the opposite direction.

I shrugged and continued walking to my locker. The day was just starting and I had already made Blocky pissed at me. I opened my locker and saw a pink note with my name on it resting on my stack of books. I picked it up, confused. I then started reading the note in the middle of the hallway.

Dear Anonymous,

Congratulations! You're qualified to attend graduation! You met the school's standards to graduate and will be attending the ceremony on Friday, June 14, at 5:00 pm. See you there!

-Goiky High School

Although the note was short, it conveyed the message well. I was super excited to go to the ceremony, as I had been waiting my entire life for this. My thoughts were interrupted when Tree started running up to me, calling my name from the end of the hallway. He showed me the envelope he got in his locker and was thrilled to hear that he was going to graduate. I high-fived him and we both went to our respective class. It was a good thing I had secretly studied before the final of this class. Once we walked in, the class looked like an office. There were dividers on every desk and the room looked more empty than usual, as our professor was in the middle of packing all his things before leaving school for summer. I sat at my desk and fidgeted with my hands for a bit until everyone was seated and ready to take the test. Our professor had already put the test on our desks.

The test was trickier than I had anticipated. The stakes were higher too. Above every desk was a camera, which could see everything above and below the desk. This meant that I couldn't cheat on the test, as I would immediately get caught by the camera. With sweat rolling down my face, I answered every question as best as I could, hoping I could at least get a satisfactory score on this test. I glanced over at Tree and he was breezing through the test. I was jealous that Tree was so smart, as I thought he was an idiot sometimes. I eventually finished the test right when the bell rang.

After my second class, it was brunch, aka a twenty-minute break. Yesterday, Eraser messaged me to meet him behind the school. I was suspicious of this at first, but Eraser is my friend. What would he do anyway? There, I met Blocky and Snowball. Blocky scowled at me, but Snowball elbowed him and proceeded to fist-bump me.

"Okay guys, I have a radical idea." Eraser eagerly told all of us.

"Let's hear it, bro!" I replied.

"Alright, I was thinking we pulled a senior prank on the school. It's our last year here after all, and if you know me, I like going out with a bang."

"I'm in, but what's the prank?" Snowball questioned with excitement.

"I've got an idea." Blocky evilly smirked. I knew he was up to no good based on the look he gave the three of us.

Blocky told us the plan. On the last day of school, we would go to school early, at about 4 in the morning. I didn't mind this, as I was used to waking up early in the morning because of my workout routine. Once we got to school, we would bring along some string from Eraser's house. Eraser's mom worked for a knitting and quilting shop, so we would be able to get our hands on ample amounts of yarn and string. We would then tie all of the strings everywhere, making it impossible to walk through the hallway without getting tangled up. Knowing Blocky, he wasn't going to stop there. He proceeded to tell us that he would also put gum inside all of the teachers' door locks and smear sticky solutions like honey and syrup on all of the lockers and door handles. The friends high-fived Blocky for the idea, but I was hesitant to accept since I didn't want to get in trouble and possibly not graduate because of a dumb prank. However, the peer pressure got to me and I accepted the deal. Blocky, still mad at me for stopping him that morning, still smiled at me and punched my arm. After he was done explaining, the bell for our third class rang.

Math wasn't the most exciting class, as Professor Five was rather grumpy and very law-abiding at times. He would always tell me off when I talked with Eraser, who had the same math class as I did.

"Pen, class is starting, please pay attention," The purple number vocalized.

"Yes sir, sorry," I rolled my eyes.

The lesson today wasn't that hard. Five handed out the worksheets and told us to practice them until the end of class. The worksheets were rather long, as each one had fifty questions. I moved my desk next to Eraser, who was on the opposite side of the room. Unluckily, Five saw me do this and glared at me. I sheepishly laughed and moved back, not wanting to get in trouble. Great. This class would be BORING!

(*Timeskip until lunch*)

The time ticked down and eventually, the bell rang. I slowly walked out of my classroom and went to put my books back inside my locker. I grabbed my locker handle and found someone had put glue on my handle. 'Who in their right mind could've done this?" I asked myself. My right hand was super sticky by now. Despite this, my stupid self rested my hand on my pant leg and it got stuck to it. I tried to pull it off, but the glue was super thick and quick to dry. "Oh shit. What am I going to do about this?" I thought to myself. Using my left sneaker, I opened my locker and threw my books inside. I shut the door and started walking to the cafeteria with one hand glued to my leg. To my dismay, all of my friends saw me walk in and started staring at me. Tree started crying his eyes out due to laughing so hard. He was sitting with Remote and Liy, who also started laughing at me. I glared at them and sat down at the table.

"Hey uhh guys, I'm kinda in a sticky situation." I embarrassingly laughed.

"What did you do this time?" Tree kept chuckling.

"Someone put glue on the handle of my locker, and I touched my jeans. I think you know the rest."

Tree tried using some water to wipe the adhesive off my hand and pant leg, but it didn't work. My hand was still stuck to my leg just like before. Liy tried to pull my arm from the elbow, but she ended up almost ripping my hand skin off.

"AHH- Liy! That hurt!" I shrieked in pain, as the glue tore a small part of my palm skin off.

"Oh, I'm so sorry!" Liy looked at my hand, shocked she was that strong.

I struggled with my hand for some time until I saw a familiar acquaintance walk through the doors of the cafeteria. Black Hole noticed me and waved. I fakely smiled and waved with my free hand, not wanting him to know what I did. He looked at me and saw my hand glued to my pants.

"Umm, Pen, it seems you have glued your hand to your pants if I'm

not mistaken." Black Hole smugly replied.

"No shit Sherlock! Can ya help me a bit?" I yelled, not meaning to be rude.

"Oh, I'll see what I can do." Black Hole stuttered and walked off to find Blocky. I overheard his conversation.

"Blocky, Pen's hand seems to be stuck to himself. Got anything to help?" He asked.

"Tall fella, why would you think I would have something to help with that?" Blocky questioned, confused.

"I thought that since you pull pranks involving glue all the time, you'd at least have something to remove it off of surfaces to... you know... get rid of the evidence?" Black Hole sheepishly said.

"Look, dude. I might have materials like that, but I'm not the most responsible dude." Blocky looked at him, deadpan.

"You're rather hard to reason with, you know that?" Black Hole pointed out and started to walk away.

Blocky shrugged and continued eating with his pals.

I sat at the table with my hand glued to my side for about fifteen minutes. This was until Black Hole brought Pillow over, who had some hand sanitizer and a towel on hand. She came up to me and examined my hand. Pillow proceeded to squirt some hand sanitizer onto my hand. I winced in pain since some of the sanitizers got into the open wound Liy caused when she tried to pry my hand off. Eventually, with enough wiping, my hand started to come loose. It came looser and looser until I popped it off my jeans, which were soaked with hand sanitizer and dried-up glue. This wasn't my day today. I thanked Pillow for helping me out. She left and told me next time, don't be sticking my hand to random things. Tree was watching the whole time and laughed at me.

I went to the restroom to wash my hands. Gosh, why was I so stupid? I laughed at myself about the whole ordeal but also thought of what my friends would think when they heard that embarrassing story.

After lunch, the rest of the day went by as normal. I had my last two periods, which went by with ease. I used my phone the entire time during those classes and chatted with friends. The bell soon rang, meaning it was time for me to leave school. I found my car in the parking lot and drove myself home, listening to my favorite tunes on the radio. While driving, I thought of the prank Blocky and my friends were going to pull. Would I do it? I didn't know myself. There was a chance I couldn't graduate if I got caught since the school has a zero-tolerance policy against senior pranks of any kind.

"Tree! I'm home!" I called out.

No answer.

"Tree?"

Thinking nothing of it, I thought Tree was trying to pull some kind of prank on me. I searched around the house, keeping a straight face just in case he would jump out and scare me. I kept searching around the house. Nothing. Now slightly panicked, I searched faster and kept pacing around the house. I knew Tree wasn't out since his cell phone was on his mattress, and he takes it everywhere he goes for safety. That's when I heard something from outside. It sounded like a cry for help. I darted outside to see a giant hole in the ground.

"Pen! Down here!" I heard from down the hole.

I peered down and saw Tree at the bottom. The hole wasn't too big, only about twenty feet deep.

"What happened? How did you even end up in a scenario like this?" I frantically asked.

"I'll answer that later. Just get me out, dude!" Tree worried.

I didn't want to call anyone to save Tree, as I thought I could do it myself. I got an idea. I hurried up to Tree's room and removed all of his bedsheets and blankets. I proceeded to make a long rope out of them. I've seen people do things like this in the movies and wanted to see if it would work here. I lowered the bedsheets into the hole and saw Tree waiting down there, as the makeshift rope had almost

reached him. Tree jumped onto the rope, but the sudden force caused my weight to shift uncontrollably. Before I knew it, I fell down the hole too. Even worse, the rope I made fell with us too, leaving no way of escape. The only good thing was that I had my phone on me. I opened my phone and saw there was no signal. It turns out, we were in an area where the satellites couldn't reach us, providing me with no internet and no way to call for help. We were trapped. No one was coming to save us. No one knew where we were. Worst of all, neither of us knew if anyone would notice our absence.

-

Here's a quick chapter for you guys! Thank me later for the quick upload (jk). Sorry to leave it on a cliffhanger. Guess you guys will have to wait until Tuesday to find out what happens!

Chapter 13: Publishing 11/09/23

Chapter 13 - Remote

Something felt off. For the past day, neither Tree nor Pen had been at school. It was even weirder since it was rare for them to be absent as individuals, nonetheless both of them at the same time. Tomorrow was graduation, and I worried about whether either of them would show up despite being absent from school. Blocky and friends have tried texting and calling both Pen and Tree, but neither of them has read their texts or answered their calls. That's what concerned me most. School wasn't the same without them. Sure, Pen was pretty dumb and Tree was sometimes a buzzkill, but both of them were friends and kept me company throughout the day. Today, I planned to hang out with Liy, as she told me she had a "surprise" for me. I walked into school this morning and saw Black Hole talking with Marker and Lightning.

"Black Hole, do you have any idea where Tree or Pen has been for the past day?" I asked.

Skeptical, Black Hole replied, "Not recently, why?"

"It's just that both of them have been absent and neither of them are answering their phones." I worriedly stated.

"Relax, I bet they're probably just sick and not on their phones."

"Knowing them, they'd be answering like crazy if they were sick. Tree has gotten sick before, so I know for a fact he would answer his phone the second I send a text."

"Okay, you have a point." Black Hole drooped his eyes, defeated.

Black Hole went on his phone and opened an app titled "Find Friends". It turns out, he had Pen and Tree's locations hooked up to their phones.

"Huh, weird. Their locations don't show up. This could only mean that both of their phones are dead."

Now I was extremely suspicious of the whole disappearance. How could both their phones be out at the same time they both are absent?

"Relax guys, they're both probably fine. I know both of them are lazy as hell." Lightning bluntly commented.

"Lightning, be nice." Black Hole side-eyed him, giving a father-like stare.

"Ugh. Whatever dude. They're probably fine."

The bell rang and I thanked Black Hole for his attempt at help. He said he would look into it a bit more and figure out what the problem was and if we should be worrying about it that much.

(*Timeskip until Lunch)*

I walked out of English class. The time seemed to go by slower than Pen's IQ during math, and that's saying something. Since Liy knew I had English right before lunch, she waited outside the door for me every day.

"Hi, Remote!" Liy greeted me with a warm smile.

"Hello Liy," I greeted back, tired from English class.

"Did you hear about what Blocky did?" Liy asked with a toothy smile.

"No, what did he do this time?"

"You're not gonna believe it, but Blocky pulled a prank on Four."

"Shut up, really?" I asked in shock, as Four was one of the harshest, meanest teachers in the school.

"Yeah! According to Eraser, he put oil on the floor in front of the room and Four fell on his face."

I started laughing and we joked about the entire situation while walking to the cafeteria. That's until Liy asked a question I knew would soon come out eventually.

"Hey Remote, do you know where Pen and Tree have been?" Liy solemnly asked, catching me off guard.

"That's what I've been thinking this entire day. I tried texting them and they haven't answered anything."

"Okay. That's a red flag. I know for a fact Pen is glued to his phone outside of school. If he was sick, he would probably be grinding games on his phone or texting during class.

"Yuh huh girl! Those boys are weird as hell." I jokingly replied.

We got our food and sat down at the usual spot in the cafeteria. We were joined by Bottle, Pie, and Pillow. We discussed why Pen and Tree weren't here with us today at lunch. Bottle mentioned that Pen texted her about something weird in their backyard, but she didn't pay much attention to it.

"Wait Bottle, can you show us the messages?" I asked politely.

"What? No! I'm not gonna let you guys check my private messages!" Bottle quietly muttered back.

"Chill out Bottle, Remote probably only wants to check your DMS with Pen."

"Ugh. Fine. Whatever you say. Thank Pie for this, as she's the only reason I'm letting you do this."

"Thanks for your cooperation," I smirked.

I read over the messages and saw what Bottle was talking about.

Pen: Yo wsg Bottle.

Bottle: Hi Pen!

Pen: You're not gonna believe this, but there's something weird in my

backyard.

Bottle: Oh? What is it loll

Pen: Idk, but it's really weird and I'm scared to get near it.

Bottle: It's better to be safe than sorry. Don't check it out up close.

Pen: OK haha

That's where the messages ended.

"I have an idea. Should we all go to their house to see if everything is okay?" Pie smugly asked.

"Sure, you're all free after school right?" I questioned, knowing everyone would probably say yes.

Everyone replied as I had hoped. We all decided to drop by the house at 4 pm today, as school ended at 3:45. This discussion took up all of our lunch break. Although I was rather disappointed, I was glad that we had an organized plan to go check if our friends were okay. The bell rang and my last two classes were almost here.

Four was in a bad mood today. I walked into their class to see them strangling another student since they forgot to do their homework. Although events like these were the norm in Four's class, this was different. I could see the kid starting to suffocate. Once Four saw me, he stopped and put the kid down. They motioned for me to come in and take a seat, as the class was about to start. This class was like hell on Earth. Four was unreasonably strict. He would "screech" at students if they did anything to break the multiple rules he established in the classroom. To make it worse, I sat next to Pencil and Match. Listening to them talk was like taking a drill and drilling into your ear canal. Match had the vocabulary of a 13-year-old who thinks they're the cool kid in school, and Pencil isn't any better. They talk all class but for some reason, Four doesn't screech them despite their loudness. Since it was the second to last day of school, Four let us do whatever we liked, which made the overall experience even worse. They still screeched at us for their amusement, not surprising any of us.

"Pence Pence, did you like see Liy today? She looks so bad with that foundation!" Match insensitively blurted.

"Omg Match, she looks so ugly am I right?" Pencil replied. Her voice was like nails on a chalkboard.

I wanted to just knock them out on the spot, but I didn't want to get in trouble, seeing that Four would punish me with a fate worse than death.

"Yeah! And also Fanny is like so overrated. I have no idea why Snowball would date her," Match laughed.

"Honestly, I could see Snowball dating her, as he didn't know how to write his name that one time."

Hearing them bicker about others pissed me off big time, and I knew Four wouldn't do anything about the situation in general. As a result, I spoke up.

"Honestly, can both of you shut the fuck up? No one likes you two in any way. Everything you guys say is a lie. I know this for a fact after sitting next to you crackheads for the last three months of school. Match. You think you're the coolest kid in school, but everything you say about others is a lie. You're extremely insecure. You're worried about your looks so you cut down others to make yourself feel better. Pencil, you too. You agree with Match on everything and won't hesitate to ride your "bestie" to the end of the earth. But it would be too easy to blame both your actions on your guys' insecurities alone. You're both losers. Both of you lie to others about how you "pull" so many guys and lie about how cool and interesting you guys are. Well, guess what? You're not interesting, you're not pretty, and you're UGLY." I ranted, wanting to get that off my chest for the past month.

Everyone in the class was shocked and wide-eyed. Even Four is in disbelief.

"Holy shit Remote. I should make you my new Assistant next school year." Four evilly smiled.

"That was CRAZY!" Stapy commented while laughing.

"Wowwwww! I didn't know you had that in yourself, Remote," Marker giggled.

"Shit got real fast." Coiny laughed.

Pencil and Match stared at me with a blank expression. I could tell Match was about to cry judging by her teary eyes. The bell rang and I walked out of the classroom, blowing a kiss to them as a taunt. Right when I walked out of class, Liy met me outside as usual.

"Soo, How was class?" Liy asked with her usual grin, excited to see me.

"I'll tell you later," I smirked at her.

We walked to PE and talked about conspiracy theories.

"Hey, Remote, if I drop a bar of soap on the floor, is the floor clean? Or is the soap dirty?" Liy asked.

"Hmm, I'm not sure. It could go either way."

"Okay, well how do blind people know when to stop wiping?"

"Uhh Liy. First of all, that's weird and gross. Second of all, can't you smell it?"

"Oh haha. I never thought about that.

We talked like this for a couple of minutes until we went to PE. The period went by relatively fast and we got to play Football the whole time, as the coach wanted us to have fun on our last days.

(*Timeskip to school dismissal*)

I walked out of the school and instantly remembered my plan to go visit Pen and Tree's house to check up on them. Right when I was about to leave school, I heard something on the intercom.

"Remote Acidof, please report to the front office. I repeat, Remote Acidof, please report to the front office."

Thinking nothing of it, I walked to the front office, as I thought they simply needed someone for something.

As I walked up to the office building, the Principal, Announcer, noticed me.

"Remote. Thank you for arriving. I got a report that you "verbally harassed" Pencil and Match. Is this true or not? If you tell me the truth, nothing bad will happen. I promise." The announcer told me with a straight face.

"Who told you this information?" I asked.

"Pencil and Match both walked into my office not too long ago and told me," Announcer replied.

"Well, I said some stuff to them, but I wouldn't call it "verbally harassing" them. I merely told them that they were being mean to others. I also might've insulted them too." I spoke with all honesty.

"Thanks for admitting you did it, Remote. From the four years you've gone to my school, I know you're a very trustworthy person. If I made the rules, I would let you go, but since I don't want to get fired, I'm going to have to punish you with a 1-hour detention. Seem fair?" The announcer slightly frowned.

"Yes Announcer, I understand," I replied with droopy eyes.

I walked to the detention room to see some familiar faces. In the room were Blocky, Snowball, Firey, Coiny, and a couple of others. Everyone except Coiny looked at me in disbelief as I walked in.

"What'd you do Remote?" Blocky questioned, curiously.

"You can ask Coiny," I replied with a straight face.

"Coiny, what did Remote do?"

"You're not gonna believe it. She DESTROYED Pencil and Match. All she did was roast them with facts. I'm honestly pretty surprised that she's in here just for talking trash about someone who deserved it."

"Oh yeah, dude. I heard about that from Eraser."

Angry, Firey yelled, "Coiny, Shut up."

"Make me, loser."

Soon enough, Firey and Coiny started slapping each other. Blocky and others chanted Fight! Fight! Fight!.

That's when the announcer walked in. He was now angrier than I had seen him initially.

"Guys, settle down, back in your seats," Announcer sternly commented.

"Blocky, and others except Remote. I'm giving all of you an extra half hour for getting up from your seats and talking during detention. As for Coiny and Firey, You will both get an extra 2 hours for fighting in class." The announcer stared at them menacingly.

"Look what the fuck you did dumbass." Coiny pouted.

"Coiny, that's another hour for swearing." The announcer rolled his eyes.

Firey was smart and stayed silent, but he still made an "L" gesture toward Coiny.

"Remote, you can leave early. Just don't tell the faculty." Announcer ushered.

I thanked the Announcer before leaving and I got in my car. I checked my phone and saw 30 unread messages from my friends. They asked where I was since we were supposed to go to Pen and Tree's house soon. I told them I had detention and that I was driving over to their house right now. They agreed and said they'd do the same.

We met outside Pen and Tree's house. Black Hole decided to tag along too, as he claimed he had nothing else to do today. Pie walked up to the front door and tried the door, which was locked unsurprisingly. However, being Pie, she wasn't going to give up that

easily. She kicked down the door in one swift blow, knocking the front door to the ground.

"I learned that growing up." She snickered.

"This is why you need rehab." Bottle laughed.

"Shush Bottle. I know you're not talking right now." Pie jokingly frowned.

We walked inside the house, which was empty. We tried calling out for Pen and Tree. No answer.

"Pen! Tree! I'll give you guys 100 dollars each if you come to the living room!" Liy teased.

Still no answer.

Now, we were skeptical about where they could be, since they would always answer to something like that. I remembered that they had an outside backyard. I went to the sliding door to check if there were any clues out there. What I saw made my jaw drop in pure fear. I saw a large hole in the ground and thought that the hole could be a clue. I looked down and my jaw dropped. At the bottom of the hole was Pen and Tree. Both of them looked malnourished and dehydrated. When I saw them, both of them were sleeping on the ground. Pen was face down, not moving, while Tree was still snoring. Frantically, I ran back inside the house and called everyone over. That's when I also noticed Pen's dead phone on the kitchen table. Something was seriously wrong.

Everyone gathered next to the sliding door and went to check out the hole. Our footsteps woke Tree up. He looked up and smiled in pure desperation.

"Oh, man. I'm so glad you guys came!" Tree panted. It was clear he was exhausted.

"Don't thank us now, we gotta get you guys outta here, fast," Pie stared back at them.

I ran inside to call the emergency hotline, while Pie and Black Hole

tried to pull them out with the bedsheet rope Tree had tried to use before him falling down the hole. The others also helped and waited for help to arrive.

It wasn't long until help eventually arrived. Multiple firefighters arrived on the scene and paced through the house. They came over to the hole and lowered a rope down. Tree climbed it and was eventually rescued, but Pen was still unconscious at the bottom of the pit. Paramedics quickly arrived on the scene besides the firefighters. They managed to pull Pen's body out of the hole. It took three firefighters to do this maneuver. They placed him on the ground and frantically checked his pulse.

"Chief, He's got no pulse!"

"Okay, signal the paramedics into the house and act fast."

"Yes, Chief."

The paramedics quickly attempted to revive Pen with CPR. They tried this for what felt like hours but to no avail. Now, time was of the essence. The paramedics quickly picked Pen up and went into the ambulance to perform more drastic measures. Since I was outside the van, I couldn't see what they were doing. All I could hear were the sounds of electric shocks echoing through the quiet suburb. The van soon drove off and the firefighters told us he was in good hands and that we'd meet him at the hospital.

We hopped inside Pie's car and started driving to the hospital. Pie was driving at least 10 miles over the speed limit at all times. Despite these dangerous conditions, no one was worried about it, as we were all focused on getting to the hospital as quickly as possible to see Pen's condition. Pie took out a couple of mailboxes while driving and we eventually arrived at the same hospital Tree went to when he broke his foot.

Black Hole had quite the experience when working on patients. He dashed into the building, as the hospital workers called him to help aid Pen.

"Guys, wait here. Pen's gonna be alright." Black Hole vocalized.

I sat in the waiting room along with all our other friends. We could hear the doctors frantically working on Pen.

"Clear!"

ZAPPPPPP

"Clear!"

ZAPPPPPP

"I feel his heartbeat! Keep going!"

"Clear!"

ZAPPPPPP

"He's breathing, hold it!"

"Hook up the blood bag doc!"

I heard this commotion from the waiting room. My heart, beating at what felt like 1000 times per second. Everyone listened in on the action, praying to god that Pen would make it through. We saw some workers run back and forth. They were getting snacks, water, and energy supplies in case Pen woke up. That's when we all heard the best thing we could've heard. Pen's voice.

"Doc! He's alive. His eyes are wide open."

"Splendid."

"Huh? Where am I? What happened?" Pen spoke. I could tell it was his voice by the sheer hoarseness.

Black Hole darted out of the room and gave us the news.

"Guys. Pen's gonna make it. He's on track to making a full recovery. Come on in."

We fast-walked to the room and saw Pen on the hospital bed.

"Hey guys!" Pen waved from his bed, noticeably weaker.

We all cried tears of joy and hugged Pen. The doctor told us that he was severely dehydrated and suffered a stroke. We also saw the blood bag in his arm to replace the blood in his body with new, better-functioning blood. He drank a bottle of water in five seconds. It was clear he was super thirsty. Thank the lord that Tree was okay the entire time.

"How do you feel, Mr. Pen?" The main doctor asked.

"Honestly, pretty good after you guys revived me. I feel 100%!" Pen smiled.

It seemed the water was the essential thing in aiding Pen's recovery. After running some tests, the doctor told Pen he was free to go. Pen hugged Black Hole and thanked him for saving his life. Black Hole shrugged it off and waved us goodbye from the entrance.

"So Tree, mind telling us how you and Pen got stuck in a hole in the first place?" Pie asked.

Tree explained all the events leading up to right now. He told us about the experience of being trapped in a 20-foot hole for almost two days. According to Tree, Pen fainted right before we came over, explaining that if we hadn't come over, Pen would be as good as dead. We talked about it the entire journey home, but everyone was too exhausted to go back to their house. We figured we could stay at Pen and Tree's house for the evening and go back to our houses at nightfall.

We soon arrived back at the house. The front door was kicked down and released from its hinges. The rooms inside were tattered and messy. We offered to help clean, which Pen gladly accepted, as he was still fatigued from the whole ordeal.

With seven people in the house, cleaning isn't too difficult. We were able to clean every centimeter of the house in thirty minutes. Pen even helped out, even though Pie told him not to, and physically restrained him on the couch just so he didn't expend any energy.

"You on drugs? You're gonna rest whether you like it or not." Pie told Pen with a serious tone.

"C'mon Pie! I feel bad about the fact I'm just watching you all clean!" Pen whined.

"No." Pie rolled her eyes.

The cleaning was done rather quickly and we all sat on the couch. Pen turned on his console and we played games until sunset.

It was 8 pm, and we all packed up and left the house. Once again, Pen thanked us for caring about him.

I hopped back into my car I had initially driven to their house and started driving. I pondered on what might've happened if we weren't there to help Pen out. Just the thought made me shiver in fright. I continued down the road and saw Fanny. She wasn't enthusiastic to see me, but she waved anyway, as she didn't have a grudge against me. According to her, I was "kinda smart" and "not annoying." It was clear that Fanny had gotten a better attitude these past couple of days. Ever since Snowball got suspended and was in big trouble, his parents kept him in the house and didn't let him go out. I now wondered if Fanny was a bad person, or if she had bad influences around her that caused her to be much meaner. She waved to me and asked if I could pick her up and drop her off at her house. I didn't have anything else to do so I agreed, wondering if this was a mistake or not.

I talked with Fanny about random stuff. It turns out, Fanny isn't a bad person at all. She was mean to people since she had a very tough childhood. Her parents both died at birth from a shooting and she had to live with her aunt and uncle. During her youth, her "parents" were extremely abusive and neglectful. Her uncle was an alcoholic and would get violent when he would drink, and her aunt was always out of the house. When she was at the house, she would make Fanny do chores and use her as a laborer. She was also denied things like food and water sometimes because her parents didn't want to spend any expenses on her. She ran away at the age of 13 and was homeless until high school. She found a home from Bubble, who found her under a bridge. Bubble took her in and Fanny could finally live a normal life. This didn't change the fact she was under a bad influence and grew up to be depressed and have a hatred for everything.

Upon hearing Fanny's story, I envisioned her differently. I comforted her while driving and eventually dropped her off at her place. She thanked me once again for listening and asked for my number so we could text. I vividly remember asking for hers in the past, just to get denied. I ushered her inside the house swiftly.

I made it back to my place after a long drive and face-planted onto the couch. Since I lived with my mom only, who was out for the day, I decided to call it a day and fall asleep early tonight, at about 9 pm. I drifted off to sleep and contemplated the rough day I had today. I was still ready for the graduation I had tomorrow.

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Holy! A 4000-word chapter? I underestimated how much I could write. Once again, sorry for the delay on the chapters. Hope this goodie makes up for the lost time haha.

Chapter 14: Publishing 11/11/23

Chapter 14 - Liy

I woke up with a cold sweat. I had an unpleasant nightmare the previous night. What bothered me was that I couldn't remember any events of the nightmare. I rubbed my eyes and saw the time. I checked my clock and it read... 9 AM??? I slapped myself and looked again. It wasn't a hallucination. I was late for the last day of school. I dashed out of bed and didn't bother getting ready. I slapped on some sweats and a long-sleeved shirt, along with some sneakers and a pair of earrings. I got ready in the bathroom and bolted out the door as quickly as possible. I checked my watch and saw that I was going to be at least an hour late for school. Luckily, my car didn't waste any time and I made it to school at half the speed I would've made if I had driven at my usual pace.

I arrived at the school to see the students all outside campus. "What was going on?" I thought to myself that an event like this was rather unusual, especially on the last day of school. Sure, my school life was far from normal, but this was extremely off-putting. I walked around campus for a couple of minutes until I met up with Remote.

"Remote, do you know why everyone's standing out here?" I questioned, eager to know the answer if she knew.

"Some unknown seniors pulled a senior prank on the entire school." Remote laughed.

I went around the back of the school to check for myself. What I saw made my jaw drop in shock. Through the open window, I saw multiple strings of yarn tied between the hallways and to every door handle. The ground was coated in a sticky, putrid substance that coated the entire building hallway. The door handles and locker vents had gum shoved inside them, and there was a message in red spray paint that read "CLASS OF 2024!" on the large wall where lockers weren't present. There were also multiple expletives written

on every square inch of the wall in red, black, and blue spray paint. It was obvious that an entire group of seniors came to school early and vandalized the entire inside of the main area of the school. I took some photos of the scene and went to show it to Remote, who hadn't seen the events that occurred inside the school. I knew she had no clue what had happened based on her reaction to the images I took.

"Oh. My. Goodness. The entire school got trashed." Remote stared, wide-eyed.

"No shit! There's a buncha stuff literally everywhere!" I commented.

"Who could've done this?"

"I have no clue. Knowing the people of the school, it was a senior. My bet's on Snowball and Blocky."

"Liy, I know them, even they wouldn't do something this extreme."

"It's a possibility." I ended the conversation.

Remote and I went back to the front where the principal was extremely pissed. The announcer told us school was canceled and that we should still attend graduation, which would be hosted on the school's field, which hadn't been trashed. He also explained that if anyone told him or the staff who did this, they would get $10,000, whether they wanted to report it anonymously or not.

Remote and I decided to spend our freed-up day at her house, as her parents were okay with me staying for the day. I waved her goodbye and hopped in my car. Right when I drove off, I saw Snowball, Blocky, and Eraser laughing as they were high-fiving each other and walking away from school. Surprisingly, Pen wasn't there. Strange. Pen was always hanging out with them during school hours. He knew them longer than ever. I shrugged it off and proceeded to drive to Remote's house.

It wasn't long until I arrived at Remote's house. I shyly knocked on the door and waited for an answer. Remote's mom opened the door.

"Hello! I'm guessing you're Remote's friend?" Her mother smiled and greeted me at the door.

"Yep! It's very nice to meet you Mrs. Acidof," I warmly grinned at her.

"It's boiling outside! Come in!" Remote's mom ushered me inside.

"Mom! Don't make my friend uncomfortable!" Remote yelled from upstairs.

I chuckled at this, as I heard Remote sprinting down the stairs. She came down with a pair of gloves on and a towel in her hand.

"Sorry Liy! I'm almost done cleaning my room," Remote awkwardly laughed at me while running.

"Take your time!" I laughed at her alongside her mom.

"Children these days."

Remote ran back up to me and apologized, mentioning that she didn't expect me to come so early. She led me up the stairs and wanted to show me something she was working on. Her room was super clean and smelled like the inside of a new car. Upon entering, Remote pointed out her "invention" on her desk. The contraption looked like a modified computer with many jumbled-up wires scattered around the vicinity of the technology. There was a glove hooked up to the wires and a mini electronic lit up once Remote pressed a button.

"I call this the lie detector!" Remote happily showed me.

"Remote, this doesn't look good," I stared at her deadpan.

"It looks AMAZING!!" I changed my tone.

She happily smiled and showed me how to use it. Once you put your hand in the contraption, the glove will detect multiple factors of your body and run diagnostics on those parts. Remote would then input a question that had to be answered with yes or no. Using advanced technology, the machine would detect if the person wearing the glove was lying or telling the truth.

"So, would you like to test it?" Remote asked.

"I don't see why I wouldn't want to!" I responded eagerly.

I put the glove on and sat down in Remote's chair. She spoke into the device's microphone and asked me a question that I would answer.

"Let's start with something simple. Is your favorite show FRIENDS?"

"No."

The screen loaded and a text box came on the screen with bold green letters, spelling the word "TRUTH".

"Is your math grade above an A?"

"Yes."

The screen loaded and a text box came on the screen with bold red letters, spelling the word "LIE".

"Gotcha Liy," Remote smirked

"This thing is amazing!" I vocalized. "Ask me more!"

"Sure thing."

"Did you steal five dollars from my wallet that one time this year?"

"No."

LIE

"HAHA! I knew you did that! That's why you avoided me all day!" Remote excitedly cheered.

What's even more shocking was that the machine was correct. I had indeed stolen from her that one day.

"I just wanted a drink!" I laughed.

"Okay okay. How about this? Do you think Blocky is cute?"

"HELL NO!" I yelled in a monotone voice.

TRUTH

"At least that was true. I was about to call you crazy."

"I was wondering if you rigged the machine." I joked.

"Alright, last one. Do you LOVE me??" Remote eagerly grinned.

Suddenly, I felt the temperature rise around me, and I felt my cheeks heat up and I started to blush. I was hesitant to answer for the first time since Remote put the glove on me. I was scared to tell her the real answer, but I knew that I couldn't back out of this one.

"Yes..."

TRUTH

Remote's face turned a deep crimson as she looked at me.

"Is that really how you feel about me?" Remote asked in delight.

"Yes Remote. I have always loved you since the day we met. I was wondering if we could become a legitimate thing, farther and more serious than what I had confessed at the hotel." I know I pushed you a little bit, and I am sorry. I just wanted the answer since I was itching to know if you felt the same way." Remote sheepishly explained.

"Remote, I feel the same way towards you. Except I was too scared to confess, as I thought you wouldn't feel the same way about me."

"So are we like a serious thing?"

"You already know it, girl!"

We both hugged each other and cried tears of joy in each other's arms.

"Why don't we go back downstairs and go out for lunch or something?" Remote asked.

"I would love that." I smiled at her, still blushing.

We walked downstairs holding hands, but Remote separated them

when she walked into the room to tell her mom that we were going to go out for lunch. Right when Remote walked into the kitchen where her mom was preparing soup, her mom turned off the stove and turned around.

"Mom, is it fine if I go out with my friend?" Remote asked.

"Yes, dear! I would love for you to spend quality time with your new girlfriend!"

Remote blushed madly and had wide eyes. "Wait, how did you know?"

"Mothers have their ways. Remote, I know that you were scared about telling me the news, in fear of me rejecting your decisions. Just know that I'll always support you until the end of time." Remote's mother smiled.

"Thank you so much, mom." Remote smiled.

"Okay, you two have fun. I don't want to mess up my famous recipe!" Remote's mom patted her head and went back to cooking her food.

I was waiting outside the room and heard the confrontation take place. I was relieved that Remote's mom was so nice and supportive of her daughter. This was something I wished I had when I grew up. Although my parents were nice for the most part, I don't think they would accept me for who I was if I had told them something like this.

Remote and I drove to a cafe for lunch, as we wanted to buy ourselves some time to get ready for the graduation ceremony later today. We walked into the cafe and ordered some food. When we sat down at our table, I noticed Fanny was there too. "You've gotta be fucking kidding me! Out of all the eating establishments in Goiky, she just HAD to choose here." I angrily thought to myself, ignoring the fact that I zoned out for a couple of seconds.

"Earth To Liy," Remote joked as she waved her hand in front of my eyes.

"I know I know." I laughed it off.

Fanny walked by our table, but she was... different... Instead of ridiculing us over anything she could think of, she waved hi to us with a genuine smile and walked off.

"What happened to Fanny?" I asked Remote.

"I have no clue." Remote brushed off my question. However, it was apparent that she knew something more. Not wanting to be pushy about it, I just forgot about the entire altercation altogether.

Our food arrived and Remote and I engaged in some friendly chatter.

"I never knew I would end up with my dream girlfriend." Remote stared at me, kindheartedly.

"I could say the same about myself." I chuckled, enhancing the moment.

We talked and talked about anything we could think of and I thoroughly enjoyed our lunch. I checked my watch and looked at the time. 2:30 pm.

"Okay Remote, I think we should go back so we can get ready for graduation." I smiled.

"Agreed."

We hopped in the car and drove back home. Remote dropped me off at my apartment complex and she walked me inside. Once we arrived at my room, she hugged me goodbye and walked away. When I watched her walk away, I felt a tingly feeling in my stomach, something I couldn't describe.

I searched through my closet, trying to find some formal attire for the graduation. My eyes fixated on a sky-blue dress in the back of my closet. Sure, it was dusty, but it would 100% do the job. I put the dress on and decided to match my dress with some teal heels. I stared at myself in my mirror and thought I looked good enough, as I was a harsh critic of myself at times when it came to my perspective on myself. I quickly finished getting ready in the bathroom and checked the time. 4:00 pm. I decided to rest in my room for a couple of minutes before leaving for graduation, as the school doesn't let

anyone in early either way. I lay on my bed and was about to start texting Remote when I heard a knock on my door. Confused, I went to answer it. I opened the door to see Firey outside. Strange. I never really interacted with Firey much inside or outside of school. I knew he lived in the same apartment complex, but we still kept our distance from each other, as I was rather shy and he probably thought that it would be "weird" to make the first move.

"Hey, Firey? What brings you here?" I asked, slightly skeptical.

"I was wondering if you needed a ride to graduation. I'm driving Leafy and Gelatin there anyways."

"Oh! Are you sure?" I asked, slightly intrigued as to why Firey would randomly do something like this. He wasn't the type to offer people free rides anywhere, which made me further question his actions.

"Yeah! We've got an extra seat in the back." He smiled, scratching the back of his head, obviously shy.

"I don't see why I would say no." I joked.

We walked to Firey's car and I met Leafy and Gelatin there.

"Hello Liy! How are you?" Leafy asked in her usual, optimistic tone.

Still shy, I replied, "I'm okay hehe. You?"

"I couldn't be any better!" Leafy excitedly yapped.

I smiled awkwardly and got in the car. Gelatin rode shotgun and proceeded to blast inappropriate songs on the radio. Not surprised, I rolled my eyes and got on my phone. I saw an unread text from Remote.

Remote: Here. Where are you?

Liy: Firey is driving me there rn

Remote: Ah okay. I figured you would be early since that's your personality 🧢

Liy: Is that a compliment or an insult?

Remote: Why would I insult you?

Liy: Idk cause why not

Remote: 💀

Remote: Anyways, see ya there girl

Liy: Sounds good! Byee!

I closed my phone and Leafy started talking to me.

"So Liy... are you umm excited for graduation?" Leafy asked, now slightly less energetic. Thank god.

"Yeah. I heard there's going to be a party at Teardrop's house afterward," I commented.

"Oh yeah! I forgot about that! Luckily she only invited certain people."

"How do you know she only invited a select few?" I asked.

"Oh, she sent me a pic of the list of people she invited," Leafy smiled, unlocking her phone in the process.

"Is it okay if I see just so I know who's going to be there?" I politely asked.

"DAMMIT LIY TOO PUSHY!" I thought.

"Absolutely! Here ya go!" Leafy handed me her phone. I read the list for a long period, as Teardrop's handwriting was rather crude when it came to neatness.

List of people invited (party)

Eggy

Needle

Lollipop

Firey

Gelatin

Basketball

Barf Bag

Saw

Ruby

Taco

Pen

Tree

Lightning

Black Hole

Gaty

Winner

Loser

Pin

Coiny

Liy

Pie

Bottle

Remote

Pillow

Balloony

Tennis Ball

Grassy

Cake

Bubble

There weren't that many people coming, meaning her house wouldn't be too crowded. According to Leafy, Teardrop's parents were out of town, further demonstrating why she chose to throw a party right after the school graduation ceremony.

I was surprised as to why she invited me, as I remember back when we were kids, I sorta "forced" her to talk since I didn't know she was mute. I was also surprised that she invited everyone to my friend group. She never really talked with us much at school. I concluded that she had maybe invited us since we were nice to her sometimes during the school year and didn't do anything mean to her.

We arrived at the ceremony to see that everyone there was super formal. I now felt as if I didn't dress up enough. I walked through the wooded gates of the school and immediately saw all of the seniors. Surprisingly, some of the jocks like Eraser, Blocky, and Snowball were qualified to graduate despite being dumb as a stack of cardboard. I figured that sports teams did all the work for them. I continued walking and eventually ran into Remote and her friends.

"Hi, Liy! I didn't know you'd show up!" Bottle greeted me with a large smile.

Remote elbowed her since she thought she was implying that I was too dumb to graduate. I chuckled at this and motioned to Remote that it was no big deal. The time was currently 4:55. Only five minutes until the ceremony started. We started walking to the stage and found our seats in the vast expansion of metal chairs. Unfortunately, none of us had seats remotely close to each other. We also saw multiple other benches lined up for our parents to sit at. I looked upon the sea of parents and surprisingly, both my parents

came, despite living thousands of miles away. They noticed that I saw them and happily waved to me.

The Principal Announcer gave a kind-hearted speech to the parents, informing them about us and explaining how out of all his years of being a principal for Goiky High, this year was particularly fun for him. He proceeded to call people up by rows in which they were sitting. I was in the second to last row, so I got to see all my friends go first. I watched in delight as he called everyone's name, gave them their diploma, and shook their hand. The Principal Announcer would also do some extra and congratulate every student who shook his hand. It wasn't long until it was my turn to get my diploma.

I lined up behind Tennis Ball, eager to get my diploma. My legs were shaking to the point where the person behind me, Foldy, noticed me.

"Hey, you okay?" She whispered, trying to make as little sound as possible. I nodded in response.

"Control your breathing." She gave me a tip. This seemed to work for some time, but not too well.

The announcer called my name soon after.

"Liy Darkston." He voiced.

Everyone clapped when I walked up. I could see my friends smiling and silently clapping too. I walked up to the stage, grabbed my diploma, and shook the announcer's hand.

"Congratulations! You made it!" He gave a warm, kindhearted smile.

I smiled back and walked back to my seat. I had done it. I had survived 12 years of grade school for this moment and this moment only. I looked at my diploma and cried tears of joy, as all my hard work finally paid off. My life was complete, for now.

The ceremony came to a close and I met up with all of my friends again. We all celebrated and congratulated each other on the milestone. Pen and Tree also met up with us, asking if we were going to attend Teardrop's party. We were all pumped for the party, as all the nice people would be there. Pen was a bit sad that she hadn't

invited any of his friends like Blocky, Eraser, and Snowball, but he could see why she didn't. It was a no-brainer that they had picked on her before, much to her annoyance.

Firey drove me, Leafy, and Gelatin back to our apartment complex. The ride back was soothing. Everyone was ecstatic during the ride back, expressing how good it felt to be done with grade school once and for all.

"Dude! I'm so pumped to finally be done with school!" Firey happily exclaimed.

"Yeah, same!" Leafy agreed.

We all engaged in similar chatter for the next fifteen minutes.

I got out of the car and walked back to my apartment, which wasn't too long of a walk. I got back to my apartment and got straight into bed to take a power nap before Teardrop's party, which was at 9:00 pm tonight. I rested my eyes and prepared myself for maybe my last party ever.

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FINALLY! NO MORE DUMB CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT!!! From here on out, there's going to be an actual plot, and not just bfb contestants being weird lol. Thanks again for reading!

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Another note (Sorry!)

I spent some time proofreading some previous chapters to make them easier to read for you guys. If my previous writings were unclear, try rereading them now, as I double-checked every chapter for errors. You guys probably already know that I misspell words on purpose since that's how the story goes haha. Thank you guys so much for commenting and reading my work. It really means a ton to me considering this is one of my ways of using my free time haha. Have a good day/night, and stay cool!

Chapter 15 - Publishing 11/13/23

Chapter 15 - Bottle

It was currently 8:45 pm. I got ready and headed off to Teardrop's party. Tonight, the drive was tedious, as the road was crowded with other drunk graduates. While I drove to Teardrop's house, I saw at least five accidents and one car on fire. Things were not pretty, to say the least. My eyes felt heavy as I slowly drove to the destination. I knew sleeping for four hours wasn't a good idea for a special day like this. Even throughout graduation, I was more tired than one of Pen's teachers when they tried to explain something to him. Despite this, I still concentrated deeply on the road. The time seemed to go by super slowly. Seconds felt like minutes, minutes felt like hours. I wondered if the party would make up for my overall drowsiness.

I arrived at the party and was instantly met with flashing lights coming from the upstairs window of the house. The house was enormous, with two stories, and seemed to be the size of a warehouse. I slowly walked up to the front porch and rang the doorbell, my hand shaking from the extreme cold outside. I checked the temperature and it was 45 degrees Fahrenheit! "Dammit Bottle! I knew you should've worn a sweatshirt!" I thought to myself. It wasn't long before someone opened the door. I looked inside and it was Teardrop. Her bright blue eyes glistened in the moonlight and her dress complimented her foundation. She motioned to me, "Welcome! Come inside fast! It's cold out." I hurriedly rushed inside the house, apologizing for wearing shoes inside the house. She shrugged it off and told me to just have fun, as she didn't care what happened to the house.

Right when I walk through the entryway, I see multiple people in the kitchen. There was a 24-pack of beers, at least a dozen wine bottles, and a jug of hard liquor on the counter. I grimaced at the sight, as I rarely drank, unless it was a special occasion or because of peer pressure. I navigated my way throughout the house until I met Pillow in an upstairs room playing video games with Gaty and Pin.

"Hey guys! Can I join?" I politely asked.

"Is that a question? Of course!" Pin happily responded, handing me a controller.

I hopped on the game and played a couple of rounds with them before taking a break to find my other friends. I walked downstairs to see even more wasted people and a bunch of foreign substances on the ground. I looked at it and it smelled like death. I could only conclude that someone retched on the ground. Disgusted, I continued throughout the house and eventually found Pen and Tree playing spin the bottle with a drunk Remote and a drunk Liy. There were at least twenty people in the circle, making the rounds extremely chaotic.

"Ohh heyy Bottle!" Liy waved at me with a drunken expression.

I fake smiled and waved back at her. I didn't want to seem like a "wuss", so I decided to join in on the fun. After many bottle spins and lots of wet kissing scenes, it was my turn to spin the bottle. I grudgingly walked to the center and picked up the bottle. I proceeded to spin the glass bottle. It spun for about 30 seconds, before pointing northeast to where I was standing. I looked at the edge of the bottle and saw... Coiny? I thought he had a girlfriend, didn't he? I sighed and walked up to him. Coiny was only a little drunk, so his kiss didn't feel too bad. I sighed and went back into the circle. I continued to play for the next half hour.

It was 10:30 pm. Teardrop told her best friend, Eggy, to call everyone to the main room. Eggy hooked up a speaker and yelled into it, telling everyone to gather in the main room for a drinking contest.

Once everyone was here, Teardrop used text-to-speech to tell us the rules.

"Okay, we will be doing a drinking contest. Whoever drinks the most in fifteen minutes, gets 100 dollars from me. The challenge will start at 10:45 and end at 11:00. Good luck to you all."

By now, most were sober, with only a few being drunk. One of those people is Pen. We all hyped each other up about the contest and many placed bets on who would win. Everyone wanted that hundred,

so no one would hold back in this challenge. I knew I stood no chance since I was extremely weak when it came to alcohol. I sat down on Teardrop's couch next to Pie. We engaged in some chatter until the challenge started.

Pie and I walked over to the kitchen and saw crates upon crates of beer. There were also multiple funnels, pitchers, and anything else to speed up the process of drinking. Teardrop eagerly stood next to the counter and counted down. 5... 4... 3... 2... 1... BEGIN! The contest started with multiple people grabbing cans of beer and drinking it as fast as they could. Teardrop made sure no one cheated by telling each person to put every empty can they drank inside of a box, which was assigned to each person. To ensure no cheating, Teardrop put a lock on every single one. Serious competition indeed. I decided, "Fuck it," and grabbed some cans of my own. I equipped myself with a funnel and gallon jug. I took multiple beer cans and poured them into the jug. I then proceeded to funnel myself down at least five cans of beer in one sitting. Normally, I would stop there to prevent injury, but I was already drunk when I finished my beers. As a result, I kept going and didn't stop at anything. I could hear chatter from unknown voices behind me.

"Is that Bottle? I didn't know she could drink that much."

"Damn, Bottle said no mercy."

"GO BOTTLE! YOU'RE IN THE LEAD."

I motivated myself to drink even more before finally collapsing to the ground. I was still conscious, but I was so full of beer and so wasted that I couldn't move. I had to use the restroom so badly, but I couldn't walk because of my intoxication. As a result, my panties were soaked before I knew it. I then fell asleep on the ground, losing grip of the world around me. The last words I could hear were Pie yelling, "Bottle! Stop! You're going to get sick!"

I woke up not too long after. My friends circled me and Teardrop was beside them. She looked very worried, as she didn't want anyone to be seriously injured. When she saw me wake up, she breathed a sigh of relief. Teardrop helped me off the ground and gave me a hundred dollars. She smiled and gave me a thumbs-up before leaving to go

drink more.

The rest of the party went how you'd expect. All of my friends except Pie got wasted and the whole house smelled like a mix of puke and alcohol. I had to step outside multiple times to catch a breath of fresh air. I also talked with Pie for the rest of the party, talking about anything we could think of.

"Hey Pie, why don't you drink?" I asked, eager to know the answer.

Pie smiled. "It's because my family forbids me from drinking and personally, I cannot handle alcohol."

"What happens if you drink any?" I questioned, now more eager for an answer.

"According to my friends, I get extremely mad and start breaking everything and trying to fight people. Pillow mentioned that I once got drunk at a bar and threw a chair out the establishment's window." Pie chuckled to herself, clearly ridiculing herself in the process.

"It can't be too bad. Here! Try a shot of vodka," I offered.

"Bottle, I just told you, I literally can't drink alcohol."

"Aww cmon Pie! You're no fun! Please!" I whined to her, making my infamous "puppy eyes" while staring at her.

"You know how to convince me, don't ya," Pie chuckled and ruffled my hair.

Pie downed the shot and made a face in the process. It was clear Pie hadn't had alcohol in a long time. She downed it and told me to take her to her car if she became angry.

It was midnight, and everyone was packing up to go home. I told my friends to meet me at my car so we could hang out a bit and chat more. We met up just outside Teeardrop's house. Before leaving, I thanked Teardrop for letting us stay and offered to help clean up. She motioned that if we wanted to, we could. I felt bad for Teardrop, as she didn't have many close friends because of her inability to speak. I offered to help and she led me inside the house. My friends wanted to

stay with me, so they reluctantly helped too. Everyone except Pie was sobered up. As a result, I left Pie in her car so she didn't wreak havoc on Teardrop's house. It turns out that Pie was correct. One shot of vodka caused her mood to shift greatly. As I was taking her out of the house, she was as destructive as a bull in a China shop. When I led her out, she grabbed some beer bottles and chucked them on the floor. She proceeded to try to fight me at the same time. The good thing is, that she is much weaker when she's drunk. If she maintained the same strength as she had when she was sober, I would've gotten shattered in five seconds. Luckily, I had no injury and Pie was in the passenger seat of her car, still angry.

The rest of us helped clean Teardrop's house. Pen and Tree were hesitant, but they complied, as they felt bad if they left the rest of the friend group to clean on their own. We cleaned the house extremely fast. Faster than Teardrop had anticipated. We made her house look good as new in only half an hour. Teardrop thanked us and offered us some money for helping her clean. When we refused, she slightly frowned, as she felt bad that we willingly helped clean her entire house for nothing in return. Because of this, she pulled 300 dollars out of her wallet, meaning each of us would get 50 dollars. When we refused again, she forcefully put the money in our pockets. My friends and I finally gave up and we left the house. We waved Teardrop goodbye and all of us decided to hang out for a little longer. By now, Pie was all sobered up, meaning we could let her out of the car without any worry. We opened the car and all of us started chatting about the party.

"Did you guys see Pen? He went into TD's fridge and drank a gallon of milk hahaha!" Tree laughed.

"Cut me some slack! I was drunk!" Pen angrily punched Tree in the shoulder.

"Don't leave out the fact that you puked all over the kitchen floor for ten minutes straight."

"Oh yeah, Tree? How about when you started randomly singing Jingle Bells in the middle of the kitchen with your pants off?" Pen could barely finish his sentence without bursting into hysterics. Everyone else laughed along with him. Tree turned a bright red and

frowned.

"That was out of my control."

"Yeah! So was my doing! Yet you clown me for it." Pen continued laughing in Tree's face.

"Also Tree, quick question. Why did you jump on Black Hole and start kissing him randomly?" Liy started giggling.

"How would you know! You passed out drunk for as long as I could remember!"

"Who said you could remember?" Pen snidely replied.

"Shit, he kinda got you there." Remote elbowed Tree.

"Why am I always the one getting bullied in the group?" Tree sighed.

"Hey now, don't act like you didn't start crap." Pillow shrugged.

"Oh, Pillow. That's ironic. Let's not leave out the moment when you went into Teardrop's garage, stole her golf cart, and started driving it around the neighborhood at top speed." Tree replied.

"Hey! I only took out a couple of mailboxes! Big deal." Pillow frowned.

"A couple of mailboxes is more than none," Pie remarked.

"Sucks for you guys. I only drank one shot and my dearest friend Bottle led me out before shit happened."

"Oh yeah? What if I didn't lead you out of the house? Hm?" I asked.

"Well, then I don't know what would have happened."

"Exactly. Also, you're such a chicken Pie. You didn't even drink any beer at the party! It's graduation for fucks sake!" I jokingly complained with my hand on her shoulder.

"I'm a chicken? Says the one who's scared of the dark and sleeps with a night light."

"So annoying," I smirked at her.

"If I'm such a chicken, how about we play Truth or Dare?"

Everyone said they were in.

"Hey, guys. We should spice this up a bit more. Regular T or D is so boring." Liy rolled her eyes.

"What ideas would you have in mind?" Remote asked.

"You guys see that giant patch of land? That's a graveyard. Let's do Truth or Dare there to make it scary. Unless all of you are too scared of course." Liy smiled.

Everyone agreed and claimed they weren't scared of anything. As a result, we decided to walk to the graveyard. It wasn't too far away, only a couple of blocks. The time was currently an hour past midnight. Surprisingly, I wasn't tired at all despite partying all day. Once we got to a part of town, there were no lights on. Just a pitch-black suburb with a couple of abandoned houses and a refurbished office.

"Psst! Pie!" I whispered in her ear.

"Yeah? What is it Bottle?" Pie asked, confused.

"I'm scared of the dark. Can I hold onto you so I feel safe?" I asked, slightly embarrassed.

Pie silently laughed. "Of course you can, Bottle. I don't mind one bit."

I held onto Pie's sweatshirt and she led the way. Remote looked at us and was a bit confused as to why I was clinging to Pie's sweatshirt. In the end, she thought nothing of it and continued walking.

We ended up at the graveyard. The sound of the crows cawing startled us. We walked through the tattered metal fence of the graveyard. The graveyard seemed to be extremely old. Some of the tombstones were worn down and were starting to rust. The main building next to the graveyard was starting to crack. The building was empty and I could see a scarecrow through the window. My

watch glistened in the everlasting moonlight as we all went under a small part of the roof of the building. Pie led me through everything and told me we'd be okay.

"So, should we start the game?"

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Woo! Another cliffhanger! Thanks for reading! I added more dialogue to this chapter than normal. Tell me if you guys prefer it! Stay cool guys.

Chapter 16: Publishing 11/14/23

Chapter 16 - Liy

WARNING: The following chapter is rather scary and can spook more sensitive audiences. If you get scared easily or are reading this late at night, proceed with caution when reading this chapter. If not, skip to the next chapter. You have been warned. Thanks for reading this.

We searched the abandoned graveyard for a suitable place to rest. It didn't take us long to find a small, wooden shed out in the open. The shed was less worn down than the main building but was still tattered to a certain degree. The foundation was peeling from the ground underneath it and it was apparent that it had been eons since anyone had paid any attention to the shed. We walked inside and found that the shed was empty, with nothing but a rusty shovel present. I used my cell phone light to light up the shed so we could see each other. It was time to start the game.

"Okay, who wants to go first?" I asked.

"I'll go first!" Pen smirked.

"Tree! Truth or dare?"

"Truth!"

"What's your biggest fear?" Pen smiled at Tree with a contagious grin.

"Well, ever since I was young, I have always been terrified of clowns. I think I became scared of them because I'd seen them on TV once and got freaked out. Ever since then, clowns have been my biggest fear."

"Okay, I already knew that." Pen solemnly continued.

"My turn." Tree reluctantly stated.

"Bottle. Truth or dare?"

"I'm not a wuss. Dare!" Bottle excitedly pointed a finger up to the sky.

"You see that abandoned building over there?" I dare you to go inside alone and stay there for one minute."

Bottle shivered. "I'm terrified of the dark though!"

"I thought you said you weren't a wuss, hm?" Tree raised one eyebrow.

"Ugh. Fine. I'll do it."

Bottle walked over to the abandoned building, taking her phone with her to use as a flashlight. I told Bottle to stay on a call with me so we could see what would happen inside the building. Bottle walked up to the rusty old door and opened it. The door swung wide open, only being hooked up to the main building with a single rusty hinge. Bottle walked inside and looked around.

"Bottle. What do you see?" Pen asked, curious.

"There's nothing here. Just some old tools and knick-knacks."

"Take some pictures so we can see exactly what you're talking about." Tree pushed.

"Okay, Tree. I'll do this only for you." Bottle sighed. Bottle walked around the house for the next minute until Tree told her she could come out. Bottle did so, running out of the house. It was clear she was scared of the dark, as she was extremely quick to exit the building. She soon came back to the shed where we were all sitting.

"So, Bottle, How was it?" Tree asked.

"It was dark, but that's it."

"Did you take any pictures?" Tree further pushed.

"You already know I did." Bottle smiled.

Bottle opened her phone and showed us the pictures. She took about six images of the objects inside the building. She even snapped a couple of selfies inside. We eagerly looked through the images to see what was inside the abandoned building. Everything was rather uninteresting until Bottle scrolled to the last photo she had taken. It was a selfie inside the main room. Behind her was a mirror.

"Bottle, can I see the picture real quick?" I asked.

"Yeah, sure. Why?"

"I just gotta check something." I shuddered.

I zoomed in on the mirror. It was a detail so easy to miss, but once you saw it, you couldn't unsee it. There was a white, shadowy figure being reflected off the mirror. I couldn't tell what it was. It had the shape of a mythical creature. Its head was round like a basketball. Its eyes shone a crimson red. The glow was faint but visible to anyone looking at the image. The most unsettling part of all was the figure's expression. It bared a set of sharp teeth and stared back at the camera as if it knew that we would be seeing the photo.

I handed the phone back to Bottle.

"Liy, what's wrong? Are you okay?" Bottle immediately noticed the sweat running down my forehead.

"Check the photo again," I urged.

Bottle took a closer look at the last photo. It didn't take long for her to see what frightened me. Her hands started to shake and she started to sweat. Something was off.

"What is that?" Bottle trembled with fear.

"I have no idea, but I think it's safe to say that something's not right."

Bottle started to cry and went to show Pie. Pie saw the figure too, but she brushed it off.

"Bottle, it's okay. It's probably nothing, like a decoration or something."

Bottle continued to cry and all of us soon realized she was having a panic attack. Bottle curled up into a ball and started silently weeping into the crook of her arms. Everyone tried to comfort her and we all sat in silence.

Once Bottle calmed down, we thought about whether we should continue the game. Everyone agreed, including Bottle. This was only because Pie was always by her side and told her she'd protect her. Bottle also felt safer around us and wanted to have a little more fun before heading back home. Despite the time being 1:30 at night, none of us were tired, so we continued to play.

"Okay, I lost count, who's next?" Pillow calmly asked.

"I'll go," Pie volunteered.

"Liy! Truth or dare?"

"Dare."

"I dare you to go find something inside the abandoned building and bring it back to us," Pie smirked.

"What? No way! That thing is haunted or something!" I refused.

"What's the issue? Too much of a chicken? BAWK BAWK BAWK!" Pie teased.

"I'm not a chicken," I said deadpan. I didn't want to make Pie correct, so I agreed.

I made my way to the building, which was only about 500 feet away from the shed. I walked through the open door and saw the inside of the building for myself. There was a front desk with old pens and a piece of paper. Behind the desk was a mirror and two candles beside the mirror. The ground reeked with an unknown scent and there were multiple tools lined up against the wall. The rafters were coated with a toxic substance and there was a large crack in the middle of the roof. I looked around and continued my way through the building.

I made it to another room of the building and saw more items. There

was a voodoo doll on the ground. There was a pattern drawn around the doll and a speck of blood was on the doll's leg. This room was much creepier and gave off an unsafe vibe. I continued inside the room until I was in the middle of the room. Once I stepped foot in the middle of the room, a chill went up my spine. I felt as if someone or something was watching me. The smell was even worse in this room than the last. Since nothing was interesting in this room, I decided to pick up the voodoo doll. I removed the doll from the inside of the red pattern and instantly felt like something was behind me. I turned around to see nothing, just a plain, boring wall.

"C'mon Liy. This isn't scary." I talked to myself, trying to make myself less scared. This didn't work too well.

I made my way out of the house and made it back to the main room. I looked in the mirror behind the desk and saw myself walk out the door. I left in haste and never looked back at the house. I clutched the doll in my left hand and made a run for the door, busting the door off its hinges as I exited.

Soon, I arrived back at the shed where all my friends were.

"So Liy, what'd you bring back?" Pie asked, curious.

"This."

I hesitantly showed everyone the voodoo doll I found in the building. When my friends saw it, some of them started to shake. Pillow seemed uneasy as I showed the cursed doll to everyone.

"Neat." Pie smiled.

"Okay, my turn." I fakely grinned.

"Pen! Truth or dare?"

"Are you kidding me? Dare all the way." Pen smirked.

"I dare you to take this shovel and dig up a random grave. In the cemetery."

I figured that since this place was abandoned, we wouldn't do much

harm in digging up a random grave. Plus, I wanted to say a good dare to get everyone on their feet.

Pen cautiously picked up the shovel and walked around the graveyard. We all decided to follow him, as we all wanted to see Pen digging up a grave for our amusement. It wasn't long until Pen stumbled upon a cool tombstone. Although the majority of the tombstones in the graveyard were old and rusty, this one looked much nicer. Instead of a tombstone, this burial had an intricate statue cut on top of it. The statue resembled an otherworldly figure with a set of wings. No one knew what it was, but we did notice some interesting qualities the statue itself had. The statute had red crystals for eyes and its body was covered in shiny gemstones that shimmered in the night.

"I'm going to try this one." Pen pointed to the gravestone.

Pen started to dig the hardened dirt up from the ground. Every dig required maximum effort, as the dirt was extremely tough and rocky due to the cemetery being abandoned. He dug until his arms started feeling like they would fall off.

"Ugh... I... Can't... Dig... Anymore... Too... Tired..." Pen panted between words.

"Well, I'd say good enough," I smiled. "Perhaps we could finish the job for you."

"Woah woah woah, it's his dare though," Tree commented.

"Yeah but do you want your roommate to get a strain injury?" I frowned.

"Okay fine, for the first time in your life, you have a point." Tree rolled his eyes.

All of us took turns digging up the grave. As we dug into the earth, the soil got easier and easier to dig since the soil underneath hadn't been compacted. It wasn't long until we stuck something hard. I peered down the 6-foot-deep hole we dug to see something I didn't expect one bit. Down the hole was an emerald-plated coffin. On the

top of the lid was a message written in a reddish-brown material. "DO NOT TOUCH, VERY DANGEROUS." It didn't take long for all of my friends to notice it too.

"Okay, let's call it a day and fill the grave back up. The box clearly says not to touch." Remote advocated.

"Pssh! A worker probably did that so no one would touch it. What's the worst that could happen?" Pen questioned.

"Thanks, Sherlock, there had to be a message on there for a reason." Bottle rolled her eyes. Pie started laughing at Bottle since she wasn't used to Bottle being sassier than usual. It was even funnier considering the fact Bottle was still clutching Pie's clothes since she was scared of the dark.

"Yeah, but this could be cool! What if there's something super valuable in here?" Pen smiled.

"No Pen! We do not permit barbaric acts of thievery in this law-abiding country!" Remote wagged her finger at Pen. I smiled and felt my cheeks heat. Luckily, it was super dark out so no one could see me blush.

"I don't care. I'm pulling this thing out whether you like it or not."

"Fine, suit yourself."

Pen tried to lift it out by himself, but it was apparent that the coffin was far too heavy for even Pen to handle.

"A little help here?" Pen stared at us deadpan.

All of us rolled our eyes and decided to help, as we were his friends after all. Everyone except Remote and Pie lifted the coffin out of the hole. Remote and Pie decided not to help since they believed that there would be repercussions for digging up a grave and stealing the contents of it.

We set the coffin on the ground next to the hole. The emerald-lined coffin was welded shut, leaving no way for us to break inside. That's when Pie had an idea. It took us lots of begging, but we convinced

Pie to help crack the coffin open. She agreed because of Bottle's "puppy eyes" and got to work. She took the rusty shovel and used it as a crowbar to easily pry open the coffin. We opened the door and saw something unexpected. In the coffin, there were multiple stacks of cash and a wooden box in the middle. All of us cheered and took the cash, while I stared at the box. The small box was black and red. It had a note on top of the box. The note read, "In this box lies the demon's eye. DO NOT and I repeat, DO NOT open this box whatsoever. If this box is opened, unspeakable things will happen to the opener and everyone they open it with. You have been warned." I put the box down and told myself not to open it, but the writing was so tempting, and the box was only sealed by one small latch. My curiosity got the best of me and I picked up the small box and opened it. When I opened it, I saw a gemstone with a bottle labeled with a skull and crossbones. I looked at the contents while my friends watched. I put the gemstone in my pocket and put the bottle back in the box. I closed the box up and put it back inside the coffin. That's when I checked my watch. The watch read 3 am. We decided it was super late and decided to all go home. We said our goodbyes and parted ways.

The drive back was slow but steady. My tiredness was apparent, as it was difficult for me to even keep my eyes open, let alone drive a car. Luckily, my apartment wasn't too far away and the drive back only took suburban roads. I walked inside the building and the person working the night shift waved at me. I waved back and carried on up the stairs inside the building. Everything was particularly normal until I got to my apartment door. Once I reached my apartment door, I felt a chill rush up my spine. I could've sworn I heard someone walking around the floor I was on, which was weird since it was three in the morning. No one would be up at this time.

I entered my room and quickly shut the door. I felt as if I was being watched by something or someone. I had a fear of being watched, but I never paid attention to it these days. Something... felt... off. I shrugged it off and got ready for bed. I went quickly, as I was super tired from staying up late. I proceeded to go to bed and shut the lights off.

It was hard to sleep. No matter what I would think about, I always

felt like someone was watching me. I checked everywhere in my apartment and found nothing, but it still felt like there was an unwanted guest in my room. I closed my eyes and attempted to sleep again, but then I heard something that made me shutter. The door to my bathroom violently swung open and I heard faint footsteps. I thought I was hallucinating so I continued to close my eyes. The footsteps got louder and louder before stopping right beside my bed. It took every ounce of me to not open my eyes and see what or who was next to me. I thought that if I pretended I was asleep, they would leave. Suddenly, I heard water dripping from the entity's hands. Drip... drop... drip... I closed my eyes, trying not to make a sound. That's when I heard the entity whisper something.

"Continue to sleep, darling." The voice spoke. It was faint and creaky, sounding like a cross-breed between a middle-aged man and a refrigerator door. The voice proceeded to say things I couldn't comprehend. It's like it was speaking in some other language. The only thing I understood was, "Sleep tight." I couldn't take it anymore and decided to open my eyes. I opened my eyes and shot up to see... nothing. The only thing I saw was a dark apartment with nothing around. There was water on the floor and muddy footsteps on my carpet. I knew this had to be real since I slapped myself before looking at the scene. Adrenaline rushed through my body like a balloon pump that wouldn't stop. Despite my efforts to sleep, I couldn't sleep at all. I kept closing my eyes and imagining what was lurking in the shadows. I would never know who this being was, or what it was here for.

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Whew! I wrote this chapter at 1:00 in the morning since I couldn't sleep as a result of being sick haha. I tried to make a scary chapter for you guys to build some suspense. My apologies if I spooked you too much. Anyway, thanks again for reading another chapter of my story. I know I say thanks a lot and it gets rather repetitive, but I'm genuinely grateful for ALL the people who view my story. I love curing others' boredom. If this story is doing so, amazing! If not, reach out to me on how I can make my story more entertaining lolol.

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Oh my gosh. 1K readers? You guys are insane! Thank you guys so very much for everything. I can't put into words how grateful I am for your guys' doings. Like I said in my message, in celebration of 1K readers, I'll be making a chapter based on what you guys want! Comment on this chapter to let me know of some good ideas on what I should write. I can even put you or your guys' OCs in the story, considering that many people have things like that haha. Sorry guys for the extremely long author's notes, but there's so much I wanna say to you guys today. Take care guys!

Chapter 17: Publishing 11/17/23

Chapter 17 - Remote

WARNING: GRAPHIC DEPICTIONS OF VIOLENCE

Credit to @remotelovesbatteries for this amazing chapter!

Today was officially the first day of summer. Since I wanted to qualify for the highest level of math, I decided to take summer school to skip a grade in math. Since I stayed up so late last night playing Truth or Dare with my friends, I slept soundly last night. I woke up and heard my mom call my name.

"Remote honey! Breakfast is on the table!"

"Okay!"

I paced downstairs and saw my mom prepare one of my favorites in celebration of me graduating high school. I sloppily ate my pancakes and relished the taste. My mom always knew how to make pancakes. It wasn't long until my plate was empty. I went to put my plate in the dishwasher and proceeded to do my morning house chores. I hated chores, but my mom was already overworking, so it was the least I could do.

After finishing my chores, I packed my backpack full of necessities and hurried off to school. I decided to take my skateboard today, as I hadn't gotten to ride it much during the school year. Since the summer school was hosted extremely close by, I figured that I would still be on time for school despite using a skateboard as my main source of transportation.

I got to school and parked my skateboard outside.

"So, this is it huh." I stared at the school, examining the tidy, refurbished building. I walked inside and saw some of my friends I knew, but the majority of the students here were from a different

school. The only people I recognized here were Golf Ball and Tennis Ball, who were both huge nerds. I waved to them and the Tennis Ball smiled and waved back.

"Hello, guys!" I greeted them with a smile.

"Hey, Remote." Tennis Ball waved back also with a smile. Tennis Ball nudged Golf Ball to also say hi, as he wasn't so fond of her antisocial, overly controlling nature.

"Greetings, Remote." Golf Ball fake-smiled. It was blatantly obvious she was faking it.

"Hey, what class are you guys taking here?" I asked, curious.

"Oh, GB and I are both taking math so we can be on the higher track."

"Cool! I'm in the same class as you!"

"You hear that GB? There's someone else here we can talk to."

"Yeah Yeah, that's cool, I guess." Golf Ball rolled her eyes and gave me a side-eye.

The bell rang and I walked with Tennis Ball and Golf Ball to our class. I knew I would be sitting in the classroom for the next four hours learning about math. I figured the class would be boring, so I bought a portable charger for my phone so I could at least have some entertainment. We entered the classroom and saw the professor. They were rather short, but they seemed to be friendly. They wore a suit and tie and sat in their office chair.

"Welcome guys! Come on in!" The professor motioned in a high-pitched voice.

The classroom already had our respective names on our desks. "Okay, so where is my desk?" I thought to myself. I looked at the seating chart. "Test Tube... Fan... Remo- A HA! There I am." I walked to my seat and laid my materials out on my desk. I brought a notebook Liy had given me in the middle of the school year, which I never used. I decided now was a good time to use it. I played some games on my phone while I waited for class to start. I saw one by one as the

students entered the classroom. The students didn't seem weird, but they were different. A girl with a cool punk-rock jacket and messy hair sat next to me.

"Heya there!" The girl reached out and shook my hand.

"Hello!" I tried to seem polite.

"I'm Microphone, but you can call me Mic. What's your name?"

"Remote. Say, that's a cool jacket you got there."

"Heh, thank you. I just got it from the denim shop from across the street."

"Neat."

We chatted with each other until class started.

"Hello all. I'm Professor X! I'll be your guys' professor this summer." The professor smiled and waved at the entire class. They were short and small, but they spoke with confidence and stood on a chair.

"So, should we start class by introducing ourselves?"

The entire class stayed silent as Professor X continued.

"Okay... let's start from this side of the room. Once you're up, tell everyone your name, grade, and what you plan to do this summer."

The class did as it was told and we finished up with introductions. After introductions, Professor X taught us some math. I looked at the board and the stuff they were teaching was extremely difficult to understand. They taught all these forbidden concepts that would take a college graduate to solve instantly. The entire class went on like this. Although the class was boring, Professor X gave us 5-minute breaks every hour and gave us lots of time to do practice problems. The only reason the class was any cooler was that Mic was a fun girl to talk to. During class, she'd talk to me about the music she produces and tell me about what it's like to be a rising star.

The class ended and Professor X told us how we all did on the

practice tests to show us where we were. He announced the three highest scorers. Unsurprisingly, Golf Ball and Tennis Ball both aced it. I ended up taking third place with one missed question. I walked out the door with Mic and we talked a bit more before she had to leave to go practice another one of her songs.

I got back on my skateboard and started to stroll home. Since I was in another part of town, I didn't know my way around. Despite using a GPS, I still managed to get lost on the other side of town. While I was checking my GPS, I heard a voice behind me.

"Where ya headed, Princess?" Another boy snidely commented. He wore a golden tee and yellow pants. He wore a gold chain and had a sports tattoo on his neck. He walked up to me with a fist and smirked at me.

I chose not to answer and continued walking, speeding up my footsteps as I thought I was in danger.

"Knife, Yin-Yang, you know what to do." The boy ushered his friends over. Before I knew it, the taller one gripped my arms. He pushed me against the rail of a bridge that suspended itself over a river. The other one helped him restrain my arms as the blonde boy walked up to me. He pulled out a pocket knife and lifted my shirt.

"WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU GUYS DOING??" I squealed with fright.

"Settle down, will ya?" The blonde boy smirked.

"You know exactly what to do, Trophy." One of the boys laughed.

That's when I felt a sharp pain in my chest. The boy took his pocket knife and started carving his name into my stomach. I screamed in pain as the two other boys further restrained me. I tried everything, but I couldn't escape, as I felt someone else grabbing my legs. I look down and see Snowball, who was helping these bullies out.

"SNOWBALL SINCE WHEN WERE YOU THIS SADISTIC?" I asked in the heat of the moment.

"You deserve this for being annoying as hell in high school." Snowball looked up and smirked at me.

"Keep cutting." The snowball looked up at the blonde boy and smirked a devilish grin.

The boy kept carving at my stomach until blood ran down his knife and coated his hand with my blood. He admired his art as he kept carving and told his gang that I was now "his possession".

I continued to struggle and struggle until I was able to slip my left foot out of Snowball's grasp. I lifted my leg and kicked the blondie straight in the men's section. He flew backward from the force of the kick and winced in pain, but the momentum sent me tumbling over the bridge into the river. The bullies looked over the edge of the bridge and I heard them talking.

"Follow her!" The lead boy yelled.

I swam as fast as I could out of the river, and I started to have a panic attack at the feeling of water on my skin. I rested on a dry patch of land next to the river and took a breather. The pain on the surface of my stomach was unbearable. I looked at my stomach to find the letters TRO and half of a P on my chest. I started to bleed out fast. I looked at my surroundings and saw a giant sewer hole that flowed into the river. I thought I was safe until I heard a rustling noise coming from the sewer. What I saw made me freeze in terror. In the sewer was a shadowy figure. I couldn't make out what the figure was because of the darkness of the sewer, but I did see the hand of the entity. It waved at me with a white glove and I could see a wide smile filled with blood from a previous victim. I got up and started sprinting in the opposite direction.

I eventually made it back up to the bridge and retrieved my skateboard. I thought I was home free until I saw the boys coming back, now armed with knives and lighters. It seemed they were out for me so I hid in a nearby bush. Their loud footsteps passed right by me as they ran down to the river. I got lucky. Very lucky. I watched the gang go down into the river and start searching for me. I took the opportunity to get on my skateboard and get the fuck out of the dangerous area as fast as I could.

"Search the fucking area faster!" I heard the lead boy yell.

"I can't find shit, asshole!" The shorter, black-and-white boy replied.

"Trophy, the bitch can't be far. She's probably hiding." The taller boy grunted.

"I don't care, keep searching."

"Oh yeah, Knife, did you see Snowball anywhere?"

"Yep, he went to his car to get some hairspray. I think for a makeshift flamethrower." Knife laughed.

"Good thinking by him. I want to see that bitch burn alive after we find her." Trophy exclaimed, angry.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: THIRD PERSON

Snowball paced his way down to the river. He came alone with one sole purpose. Find Remote and torture her. He searched the area but to no avail. That's when he heard a slight splash coming from the sewer hole. He thought to himself, "Did I hear something?" He figured that it was Remote trying to hide from him. He smirked and made his way into the sewer. He walked through the dark opening calling Remote's name.

"Remote... Come out... I hear ya!" He started to laugh maniacally.

"I hear ya, Let's make this easier for the both of us."

Snowball wandered deeper into the sewer, using his lighter and hairspray as a flamethrower to light his way. He continued through the sewers for a few minutes. He kept going until he heard a whisper to his right. He slowly turned with a smile and blew his flamethrower. He expected to see Remote finally come out, but that was far from the truth. Snowball lit the flamethrower to see four zombies walking towards him.

"Hello, Snowball! Come play with us..." The zombies muttered.

"AHHHH!" Snowball screamed in terror before blowing his flamethrower at the zombies.

Snowball blew his flamethrower before running in the opposite direction. He ran for a couple of seconds before tripping on something in the water, soaking his lighter and hairspray, leaving his makeshift light source useless. Snowball kept blindly running through the sewer system until he came to a dead end. His path was blocked by an array of steel bars, which were three inches in diameter each. He tried to squeeze through the bars but was unable to. He wiped his face and saw blood on his arm. He fell into a pool of blood in the sewer.

"No, Snowball, this isn't real. Snap out of it!" Snowball started shaking with fear.

That's when Snowball was met with an object. Out of the shadows, a rubber playground ball rolled to his feet. There was a message on it, which read, "DIE". Snowball then heard a laugh before a shadowy figure stepped into view. Its mouth is soaked with blood and its clothes are covered in sewer water. The entity ran full speed at Snowball, lashing its sharp teeth at him. Snowball screamed in terror as the monster attacked him. The monster jumped on top of him and started mutilating him. It sunk its teeth into his neck and ate Snowball alive. It ripped his arms off with ease and devoured them whole right in front of him. It prolonged Snowball's suffering as much as possible by eating non-vital parts of his body first before working its way up. His screams echoed throughout the sewer, but no one heard him. No one would come to his rescue. Not even his gang. The monster eventually ripped out Snowball's still-beating heart.

Snowball finally died after being eaten for about ten minutes straight. His screams would continue to echo throughout the expansion of the sewer system. After the monster was done with its meal, it retreated to another part of the sewer system, where it would dwell for some time.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: BACK TO REMOTE

I skated home faster than lightning. I went at least twenty miles per hour on my skateboard and eventually made it home quickly. I opened my front door with my spare key and walked inside.

"Hey, Remote! How was scho- oh, why are you soaking wet?" My

mom asked, concerned.

"I fell into a river on the way back from skating." I lied.

"At least change out of those clothes! You don't want to get sick!" My mom continued, this time more worried.

I changed out of my clothes into some new, more comfortable clothes. I wouldn't tell my mother what happened during the whole ordeal today. I changed and went back downstairs for dinner, as it was about 5 pm. My mom called me down early because she was "killing" this new recipe she found and wanted me to try some. She gave me a spoonful of the new chili she made.

"I don't like it..." I fake frowned.

"Oh! Why not dear?" My mom seemed sad.

"Because I LOVE it!" I lightly smiled, hugging her.

She smiled and told me not to do that again.

I sat down at the table and my mom served me some early dinner. I ate dinner with her, but I was slightly shaking with fear because of what happened after school. I was genuinely surprised that my mother didn't notice my bleeding stomach, which had scabbed over a bit by now as the blood dried in the humid breeze outside.

"Remote, are you okay? You're shaking."

"I'm fine, Mom." I rolled my eyes slightly.

"No, you're not. Something is troubling you. You don't have to tell me, but I could help you."

"Yeah, it's better if I don't tell you." I frowned.

I finished my food fast before storming up to my room. I closed the door and rested on my bed. I turned on some music to help myself forget about the events, but nothing worked. I held my head and tried to snap myself out of what was happening. I eventually drifted off to sleep, taking a nap.

(Remote's nightmare)

I woke up on top of a dock.

"REMOTE REMOTE! HELP HELP!" My mom cried out. I could hear her screams of terror echo throughout the area.

"MOM!" I screamed.

I quickly peered over the edge of the dock to see my mother drowning. I wanted to jump in, but I knew that I would die if I tried, as I knew I couldn't swim. I had to watch my mother slowly and painfully drown to death in the open water. I started to cry and blame myself for my mother's death. Suddenly, a force pushed me into the water and I started falling. I looked up and saw the boy who carved part of his name into my stomach. I hit the water with a splash and instantly started to scream. What made the experience so much more traumatizing was that I could hear the group of boys laughing and teasing me as I started to slowly die. I struggled to keep my head above water and I started to lose energy. What was worse was that I saw my friends also on the dock, farther away, but they didn't notice me.

"I'M RIGHT HERE! PLEASE SAVE ME!" I wailed.

Nothing worked. I started to lose energy and my head started to sink underwater. With my last breaths, I tried calling out for my friends one last time, but to no avail. I sank under the water and drowned to death. I felt the burn of the water as it entered my lungs and started to drown me.

(Back to reality)

I woke up in a cold sweat and I breathed deep breaths. I pinched myself to test if this was a dream. Luckily, it wasn't. I knew I was safe for now, but that didn't stop me from crying tears. I cried into my pillow and shook from the trauma I had experienced from today, wondering if this was what hell felt like.

-

What a thriller! This chapter single-handedly made me want to set

my story to mature, as there were many violent scenes you saw in this chapter. Despite still being very sick, I have three more chapters on hold, ready to publish throughout the week. Stay tuned and stay cool all!

Chapter 18: Publishing 11/19/23

Chapter 18 - Pillow

WARNING: SCENES OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

This chapter takes place on the same day as the previous chapter...

I woke up with sweat dripping down my forehead. Last night, I couldn't sleep at all. I kept having terrible nightmares about my father abusing me. The memories rushed back to my head like an everlasting cold. They always seemed to leave at times, but would always come back more grotesque than ever. I strapped on my favorite pair of sneakers and changed into my usual clothes. Not too long ago, I had volunteered to work a summer job despite already being extremely wealthy. I thought that it would help me build character and create more opportunities for me in life. I got ready and went downstairs to see my dad cooking in the kitchen.

"Need any help, Dad?" I asked.

"No sweetie, I'm fine. Thanks for offering." My dad smiled at me. "Are you in the mood for your old man's signature breakfast?"

I was already starving, so I couldn't turn down this offer. It turns out, my dad was making one of my favorites, fried rice and miso soup. I licked my lips as my dad served my food at the table.

"Dad, where's our butler?"

"Oh, he told us he was sick today and I told him he could stay home."

"That explains it."

My dad served my food and I proceeded to scarf the food down as fast as I could.

"Pillow, the food's not gonna run away!" My dad smiled.

"I can't be late for my job today." I continued to eat.

"But it starts in 2 and a half hours! You have time!" My dad continued giggling.

"Still. I take no risks."

"Whatever you say, Pillow."

I finished my food and went over to the front door. I put my coat on and told my dad I was leaving. He smiled and waved to me from the table. I waved back before leaving. Today, I decided to take my electric bike to the library, as it was only a couple blocks away. As to why I didn't walk? It was simply because I was too tired yesterday from playing Truth or Dare with my rambunctious friends. I rode my bike a little while longer until I saw Nickel and Taggy on the sidewalk. Despite me wearing a motorcycle helmet, they still recognized me. I figured it was because of the distinct white outfit I wore today.

"Hey Pillow! How are you?" Taggy smiled, waving with their foot since they didn't have any hands.

"I'm good, you?"

"Great! I got Nickel a job," Taggy smirked while lightly nudging Nickel.

"Damnnn, fresh bike!" Nickel pointed to my freshly painted motorbike.

"Thanks!" I smiled. "Hey, where are you two headed?"

"Oh, we're just headed to the library to return some of Taggy's overdue books." Nickel side-eyed Taggy.

(*FYI, if you guys didn't know, Taggy is Price tag haha.*)

Taggy stared at Nickel and nervously laughed.

"Would you guys like a ride? I'm going to the library too!" I smiled and kicked the side of my bike.

"Thanks, but how will we both get on the bike?" Nickel squinted his eyes.

"Easy! You and Taggy can fit on the seat and just ride with me." I pointed to the rather large seat.

"Yeah, but don't we need helmets?"

"It's okay. I'll drive carefully. I've been doing this since I was a teen, and I've never crashed once."

"If you say so."

Nickel and Taggy got on the back of my bike and I put down my helmet visor.

"You guys ready?" I solemnly asked.

"Yes!" Both Nickel and Taggy said in unison.

"Prepare for liftoff."

I started the bike's motor and it didn't take long before I was going about 20 miles per hour. Not my usual speed, but a safe speed for my passengers. Taggy was having tons of fun while on the bike, telling me to go faster. On the contrary, Nickel was scared for his life, clutching my shoulders with all his strength as I rode.

"Too fast, Nickel?" I asked.

"What?"

"Am I going too fast?" I said, louder this time.

"No, you're fine," Nickel replied. I could tell he was scared because of the way he was holding onto my shoulders.

I started going 15 miles per hour, but Taggy complained that it was too slow and that Nickel was just being a baby. I chuckled, not

knowing who to listen to.

"Taggy, if we weren't currently on a moving bike, I would beat you to shreds." Nickel frowned.

"You're 4'9. I could step on you." Taggy chuckled at her joke.

"It's not my fault my parents are short!"

"But it is your fault for challenging me to a fight, knowing full well that you won't win."

The two bickered while I drove the bike, ranging from speeds of 15 miles per hour to 30 miles per hour at one point. Both wanted different things, but I eventually arrived at the library. Nickel and Taggy hopped off and they both thanked me for the ride. Surprisingly, Nickel thanked me too.

I got off my bike and locked it to a nearby street lamp. By now, it was still early in the morning and I was an hour early to my job. I checked into the doors with my card and the metal doors swung open. I looked around the library and was refreshed with distant memories I would have come here after middle school to read the newest novels. The only other person in the room was the head librarian.

"Hello! You must be Pillow Fluffen, right?" The lady said from the counter.

"Yep! That's me!" I waved.

"Welcome! I'm assuming this is your first day on the job?" She asked with a smile.

"It is. Mind showing me around?"

The librarian left her post and gave me a tour of the library. Despite already knowing the layout, I pretended to be naive to be polite to her. Once she finished up the tour, there were five minutes until the library opened. Today, my job was to man the counter and check people's books out. I found an interesting book off the shelf and started reading it to pass the time.

The library opened and although business was slow, it was fun working in the library since I could read all day and I got to make some cash from checking out books. After some time, my first customer walked in. It was Gaty and her friends Saw and Lollipop.

"Hey guys! Welcome in!" I waved to them with a smile.

"Hello, Pillow! I didn't know you worked here!" Gaty smiled.

"It's a summer job," I remarked.

"I thought you were rich." Lollipop rolled her eyes and continued typing on her phone.

"Hey, now Lollipop! Don't be mean." Saw glared at her.

"No, it's all good. I'm working here since I wanted to occupy myself for the summer before going to college." I explained to Lollipop, who was too busy on her phone.

The three continued through the library and filled up an entire cart of books. Most of them were Gaty's. They wheeled the cart over and I checked out all the books.

"Do you guys have your cards?" I asked.

"Oh yeah, sorry about that." Saw scratched the back of her head. They all proceeded to give me their cards.

"Hmm Gaty, it seems you have three overdue books." I nervously smiled.

"Oh yeah! Dammit, why didn't I bring those in today."

"It's okay. You still have a week to bring them before I have to charge you. Sorry about the rules. It's store policy and I don't want to be fired on the first day haha." I laughed.

"Got it. Thanks so much, Pillow!" Gaty smiled and walked away with all our books.

"Bye! Thanks for the help!" Saw waved. Lollipop rolled her eyes and

kept typing away.

I waved back and the head librarian was behind me.

"Good job, Pillow! For your first time, you did exceptionally well." She commented.

"Thanks so much!" I nodded.

"Hey, I'm sorry about this but I have a task for you." The librarian nervously said.

"No, it's fine! What do you need?"

"One of our clients wants a book that isn't currently on shelves. Can you find it in our archives?" The librarian pointed to a long staircase down into a giant basement where the library kept all their archives and other books.

"Sure! Is it possible that I can do it a bit later? I need to take some orders." I smiled.

"It's perfectly fine hun. You can do it anytime before you leave work today."

She left and went to help some people find books. It was now almost noon and the library was filled with people all around school.

My next order was Nickel and Taggy. They had to return some books and wanted to check some books out while they were at it. Taggy slid their books through the return slot and proceeded to lay some books on top of the counter for me to scan. Nickel also brought some books and purchased some. They both also put their library cards on top of the books so I could check them out quickly.

"Hmm, Nickel... you have an almost overdue book. Make sure to bring it in by tomorrow."

"Okay, I will." Nickel rolled his eyes.

"Nickel, be polite. Pillow's doing her job." Taggy elbowed Nickel in the rib.

They grabbed their books and put them in their backpacks.

"Sorry about Nickel. He's one cranky potato." Taggy joked.

"It's okay! I find it rather humorous, to say the least." I laughed along with them.

I continued to work and eventually went on lunch break. The main librarian let me go for a couple of hours for lunch, as there were more staff working at the library who could take my place. I went to the cafe across the street for a quick lunch and came back in a jiffy.

I continued to work at the counter, checking everyone out. For the most part, everyone was nice, and working at the library was extremely fun, as some of my friends even came by since they not only wanted books but also knew that I was working there. While working, I read my new book and filled in some time gaps.

The sun set quickly and the final customers in the store were leaving. Black Hole and some of his friends came by to check out books.

"Bye Pillow! Have a nice evening!" Black Hole waved.

"Thanks, dude! You too!"

Now, the library was empty. It was 9 pm and the library closed at 10. I just remembered that the librarian wanted me to find a book in the archives. I went over to her and asked what book she wanted. She claimed that the customer wanted a book titled "Warriors, Fire and Ice." I had never heard of that book, but it sounded rather interesting. I found the author and decided to read while walking down the stairs. I kept reading, but my book was getting interesting, so I went back up the stairs and continued reading my story on a bench.

"**The young girl had come back from a long day of work. Her sweat pouring down her face as she had gotten her report card back not too long ago. Her grades were so bad, she started to cry. The girl walked through the front door and was met by her dad.**

"Report card. Now." Her dad boastfully roared.

"Her hand shook as she reached into her backpack and pulled out her report card. Her dad snatched it quickly and started looking down at the card with wide eyes.

"A C? How the fuck did you get a C?"

"I'm sorry Dad! It's just that I've been having trouble studying lately!" The girl wailed and started crying waterfalls.

"You're a fucking failure to this household. Why can't you be a normal kid? Always the excuses too!" He slammed his fist on the countertop and squeezed his cup of liquor so hard it shattered.

The girl, now shaky, says, "A-a-are you going to t-take away m-my dinner again?"

"No. I'll do something I should've done a long time ago." The dad says as he picks a belt up. He holds the belt by the leather end with the buckle on the far end of the belt.

"N-no p-please I p-p-promise I-" Her voice was soon cut off by a violent scream. Her dad beat her with the metal end of the belt, smacking her across the back, legs, and head. Terrifying screams were heard throughout the house as he grabbed the girl and mercilessly beat the girl until she was on the ground, shaking.

"Oh, I'm not done yet." The father says, deadpan."

I stop reading and feel a scared sensation in my heart. This part of the story made me remember bad memories about my past. I dropped the book and left it on the bench as I tried my best to forget about the words of the story. The stairs to the archive were long and tedious, stretching at least thirty feet underground. It had also been apparent that no one went down here that much. I made it to the bottom when suddenly, I heard a crinkling noise under my foot. I peered down and saw a dollar bill. I picked it up and continued walking. About twenty feet away, was another dollar bill. I found a trail leading deeper into the archives. Although the room was dark, with only a small green glow coming from the overhead light, I could still see the books on the shelves and the money under my feet. I continued collecting the mysterious money until I saw the trail end.

I searched the archives for the book. I ended up finding it rather fast. I examined the spine to check if I was right. That's when I felt a cold breeze on my neck. I turned around and saw nothing.

"C'mon Pillow. Stop being such a scaredy cat!" I thought to myself.

I started heading back when I saw a tall humanoid figure in front of me. It resembled a skinny, middle-aged man with a beard and a large smile. He wore fancy clothes and held a cane in his left hand. I looked at him. He looked at me. We held eye contact for a long moment.

"Sir, do you need anything?" I asked.

The figure turned its body towards me and smiled, showing its sharp, pointy smile. It let out a roar that echoed throughout the entire library. I ran deeper into the archives. I could hear its footsteps chasing behind me. While running, I could hear horrible memories play back in my head like an old cassette tape. It wasn't long until the memories flooded my head, making my head throb with pain.

"Pillow, get over here, you deserve punishment."

"You're nothing to me. You will never be anything."

"All you do is disappoint me."

"Alright, Pillowy! Time for punishment!"

"HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA"

"PILLOW GET THE FUCK OVER HERE"

The phrases of my dad's abuse played back in my head as I ran through the archives. I clenched my head while I ran and ended up dropping some of the money I had found in the process. I could still hear the screeches of the figure behind me, but I knew looking back could smell my death. I ran and ran through the archives until I found the exit. I ran up the stairs and saw the librarian at the top. I ran so fast that I ended up running her over on accident.

"Pillow! What's the issue? Are you okay dear?" The librarian asked

with a confused expression.

I didn't answer and looked back down the steps. The entity had disappeared without a trace. I got a chill up my spine and completely ignored the librarian. I packed my things and prepared to go home. My hands were shaking as I left the library. I almost forgot to give the librarian the book, which I remembered to do.

"Pillow dear! Talk to me! Are you okay?"

I didn't answer and I left the library. I got on my bike and went home. I went as fast as I could on my electric bike, going 60 miles per hour down a busy road. I didn't care about what others thought of me. I just wanted to get home as quickly as possible. I made it home super quickly and walked through the front door.

"Hey Pillow! How was your first day of work?" My dad cheerfully waved from his work desk.

I didn't answer and kept walking up to my room.

"Pillow? You okay?" My dad worriedly asked from downstairs.

I ignored him again and slammed the door. I sat on my bed and put my face on my pillow. I started to shake and shutter from the events I had just witnessed. I wondered to myself what that was and how it just disappeared when I met up with the librarian. I cried and the adrenaline I had in my body wore off. My legs hurt like hell because of all the running I did in the library. I was so tired, I didn't bother changing or getting ready. I just brushed my teeth and went to bed early.

I couldn't sleep at all and I continued to sweat. The events were too traumatizing for me. I clutched my head and tried to go to sleep, but my body wouldn't let me. That's when my dad walked into the room and comforted me. He hugged me and let me cry into his arms. He stayed in my room until I drifted off to sleep, which took an extremely long time. For thirty minutes, I cried and shook in my bed. I remembered the traumatic events that occurred on those days of abuse. The blood on my hands... The marks of the belt... The memories of my mom's passing and my dad spiraling into madness.

Although my dad was much better now, the events that happened will always permanently reside in my head.

I fake slept and my dad walked out. I picked up my phone and texted some friends to meet in front of Liy's apartment, as my dad didn't know about it.

Private chat with Liy:

Pillow: We NEED to meet tomorrow. Your apartment.

Liy: Hold on. Did I permit you?

Pillow: Liy, it's fucking urgent. Don't try to argue with me

Liy: Okay okay, I'll let you inside, only because I have news too

Liy: Also, is it okay if I invite Remote too?

Pillow: You don't have to ask me. Ofc she can come.

Liy: Okay then, 11:00 my apartment tomorrow

Pillow: Good. See you guys then.

I started to slowly spiral into psychosis. I felt like nothing was real and that I was going insane. I was aware that I was starting to go insane, but I didn't know how to shake the feeling of it. I grit my teeth and put my face into my pillow. I slammed my mattress in both rage and out of pure fear. I knew I wouldn't sleep at all tonight, so I braced myself for the worst tomorrow and pondered to myself on my bed.

-

Hey all! I'm officially not sick anymore woo! Enough about me now haha. Thanks for reading another chapter of my story. This chapter only took me thirty-ish minutes to write since I had so many ideas for this chapter. Things are officially starting to heat up in the story. What will the characters do about this curse?

Chapter 19: Publishing 11/20/23

Chapter 19 - Liy

Today was Sunday. Normally, I would be happy that I had the day off, but the events two nights ago still stuck with me. For the past day, I wondered what that "thing" was that had walked into my room last night. I concluded that it had to be something otherworldly, as I always lock my doors before leaving. There was no way that someone would be able to enter my apartment like that entity did. I woke up and did nothing but stare into nothingness. After my parents died in a house fire when I was a toddler, I had no one to live with. I was alone. In my room. Only accompanied by the thoughts in my head. My mind was like a prison that I couldn't escape. No matter what I did, I couldn't stop thinking about that night. What was even more uncanny about that night was that the voice sounded similar to my dad's. I know how my dad sounds because the job he used to work at had some audio tapes of him when he used to send my mother voice letters to tell her he was okay when he went on business trips. I played back one of his letters while resting on my bed.

"April 16, 2005. Hey dearest! It's your old man checking in to tell you I'm still alive. I recently closed a deal with a business partner and things are currently looking up from here. I'll give you more details when I'm back from the trip. Bye, sweetie! Make sure Liy is well-fed and happy!"

I replayed the tape at least five times before staring at my wall, expressionless. I still remember the day that my house started to burn down, despite only being a toddler. That's how painful the memories were. My dad and mom seemed like super nice people. I wish I had gotten to know them before they passed. When I have nightmares, I can still hear their screams of terror and my dad's voice trying to tell my mom that they'd be okay and that they'd get out of the fire alive.

Even though my sanity was diminishing, I was thankful that Pillow had requested to meet at my house to talk about something. I was

even happier when I found out that Remote would come too. I admired Remote. She was the first to be nice to me as far back as I could remember. She stuck with me ever since the beginning and never left my side. The thought that we were now a thing made me feel slightly happier. I got a confidence boost and got ready for the day in a jiff. I looked at my watch. 11:00. I heard the doorbell ring and saw Pillow and Remote outside the door.

"Hey, guys. Come in." I ushered them in, giving a soft smile.

Remote and Pillow seemed... different... Both of them weren't as vocal as before and they seemed to be much more cautious. It made the entire situation rather awkward, despite knowing them both for years. They walked inside the apartment and sat on my couch. Trying to lighten the mood, I was the first to speak.

"Soo Pillow, why did you wanna meet here again?" I quietly asked.

She motioned us to all sit on the couch.

"Okay, I came here to tell you guys that I've been experiencing really weird things lately. Yesterday, I got attacked by something while working my summer job." Pillow spoke with a quavering voice.

Remote and I stayed silent while she explained what she experienced. I was silent because I knew she wasn't lying. I too had experienced an occurrence like hers, but the "thing" she was talking about didn't physically interact with me when I experienced it in my room.

"Same. I had an encounter with the figure too." I sighed.

"What happened to you?"

"Well, the night that we dug up the grave after Teardrop's party, something very odd happened," I explained.

"Go on."

"Something entered my room and started speaking in a different language to me. I pretended that I was asleep so I wouldn't get hurt in the process, which seemed to work since all I saw when I woke up were muddy footprints and a damp carpet."

"That's so fucking weird. How could something possibly enter your house if you locked your door?"

"That's exactly what I was thinking."

We talked about what had happened until Remote chimed in, confessing she too had an event.

"You guys aren't alone. I saw the thing too."

"What did it look like?" Pillow asked.

"When I saw it, it looked like a man with giant eyes and a big mouth packed with a bloody smile."

"That's strange since when I saw it, the monster was dressed in fancy attire and held a cane. He dressed sorta like my dad in a way, which creeped me the hell out." Pie commented.

"So are we seeing the same thing?" Remote asked.

"We have to be. There's only one thing that can haunt us." Pillow solemnly replied.

"But it took the shape of a different entity for the both of us!" I chimed in.

"That's because it's probably a shapeshifter," Pillow replied.

"Wait, Remote, did the entity physically interact with you in any way?" I asked.

"No, but I still saw it next to a sewer pipe."

"How did you end up next to a sewer pipe?"

"It's a long story." Remote frowned, sadder.

"Tell us." Pillow urged, eager to find more information about this thing.

Remote told us about how she was bullied and attacked by a group of boys. She couldn't recall their names, but she remembered that

Snowball was one of the bullies.

"So did they injure you?" I asked, skeptical.

"Well... no..." Remote started to blush and sweat a bit. It was apparent she was lying.

"Wait a second. What's that under your shirt?" I asked with curiosity taking over.

"It's nothing! Don't worry about it." Remote started to sweat more.

"Remote, I trust you on most occasions but not this one. Sorry for this but..."

I lifted the bottom part of Remote's shirt and saw grotesque carvings on her stomach. The carvings were at least a centimeter wide and it seemed like the bloodied wounds were spelling something.

"T-R-O-P-" and it ended there.

I couldn't tell what it meant but Remote was injured. The wound seemed infected, as there was an ample amount of pus around the cut-open areas.

"REMOTE! WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL US THIS HAPPENED?" I yelled out in anger.

"Because I didn't want you guys to worry about me!" Remote put her head down."

"OKAY? THIS IS SERIOUS! WHO DID THIS TO YOU?" I asked, more angry now.

"Liy! It was this guy named Trophy! He and his gang attacked me with a knife and Trophy tried to carve his name onto my stomach with his pocket knife."

"Okay, we need to get help immediately." I clenched my fist in frustration. "Pillow, let's go."

All three of us walked out the door and started driving to the

pharmacy nearby to pick up medical supplies to treat Remote's wound. Due to the fast movement, Remote's wound started bleeding again. We sped to the nearest pharmacy and told Remote to wait in the car, as we didn't want her putting too much stress on the wound.

Pillow and I walked into the store. Luckily, the store was rather empty today and there were many workers here. We rushed to the medical aisle and found everything we needed. Infection cream, bandages, wound tape, etc. We got the items and started walking back to the checkout area when I saw... Pie? I looked at Pie and waved and she immediately hid something behind her back. I didn't question it and kept walking to the front desk. Once Pillow and I were almost there, we noticed we both forgot our wallets, meaning we couldn't afford the supplies. Pie noticed and walked over to us.

"Step aside. Let me handle this." She walked to the counter. She met the person working there and tried to flirt with him. She reached out to touch his hand and knocked a tower of sunglasses over on purpose. The clerk went to pick them up and she motioned us to run out of the store with the items. I wasn't a fan of stealing, but this was our only option. Our friend needed us. Pillow and I slowly ran out the door with the items in hand. Pie ended up paying for her unknown item and walked out a couple of minutes after we did.

Pillow and I paced back to the car to tend to Remote's wounds. Pie asked if she could come to help us since her parents taught her how to survive back when she was a kid. I reluctantly agreed despite not liking Pie very much. It didn't take us long to get back to the car and start working on the wound.

"Alright, where's our problem," Pie forcefully.

Remote said nothing but pointed to her stomach while lifting her shirt to show the gash marks.

"Okay. Not the worst I've seen, but it's worse than I had pictured," Pie stated.

Pie got to work and cleaned the wound with wound cleaner. I could tell the cleaner stung because Remote winced in pain as Pie applied the cleaner.

"Does it hurt?" Pie asked while working.

"No no, it hurts less the more you work with it." Remote reluctantly stated.

Pie cleaned the wound until it didn't have any infection on it.

"Pillow, pass me the polysporin."

"I got it."

Pillow handed Pie the polysporin and she got to work, spreading the cream all over the wound to prevent infection. She was focused and I admired how good Pie was at this type of stuff. It made sense that she grew up in the Mexican outback, where resources were scarce and she had to learn to survive on her own.

Pie proceeded to bandage the wound to the point where the wound wasn't visible anymore.

"Thanks, Pie, you're a lifesaver." Remote tiredly smiled.

"You're welcome. Stuff like this used to happen all the time back then."

"What does that mean?"

"I'll tell you later if I'm also allowed to hang out for the day."

We agreed and Pie got into the car.

The drive back was rather quiet. Pie was on her phone laughing at offensive memes. Remote was sleeping. It was only Pillow and I who weren't occupied with something. We whispered to each other to not wake Remote up. Since Pillow was driving, she was rather focused too, leaving only me and my thoughts. Despite hanging out with my friends, the thought of Remote being hurt stuck with me. I felt like I was starting to slowly go insane. Why was life so unfair? First, my parents died in a house fire and I wasn't taken care of all my life. Now, we are all under the control of some supernatural entity who's out for nothing but blood.

We all got back to my apartment, rather tired from the outing. I opened the door and saw a small note on my pillow. Confused, I walked in and picked it up. I read the note out loud to my friends, who were also curious.

"DIE"

By now, all of us were freaked out. The note was written in a crude, blood-red color and no one recognized the handwriting. Knowing my friends, none of them had handwriting that looked like that. Something was 100% haunting us. Pie was shocked. She took the paper and burned it with a lighter she brought with her to my apartment.

"How... How the fuck does something like this happen?" Pillow asked, worried.

"You think we know?" Remote rolled her eyes.

"Guys, calm down, this is all too weird to be true. This thing probably wants us to react this way. Let's not give it what it wants by just being calm and taking time off to ourselves." Pie shrugged.

"Pie, why are you so chill about this whole thing?" I asked.

"Because I know how people play mind games."

"That doesn't explain much, but I'll take it."

All of us sat down and discussed what this thing could be. None of us knew what it wanted or why it was haunting us in particular.

"I have a radical idea!" Pie smiled.

"I hate where this is going but go ahead." I exhaled.

Pie rolled her eyes. "We should just have a calm, peaceful outing tomorrow with the rest of our friends. Since this entity is playing with our head, calming ourselves down and being rational about certain situations should be enough to ward it away for good."

"Honestly, that's a good idea," Remote commented.

"For today, we should stick together so the entity can't attack as easily since according to you guys, the entity only attacked when you guys were alone with no one else around," Pie claimed.

"You're definitely onto something. How are you so smart, Pie?" Pillow asked.

"Experience."

We decided to spend the night together, but the night was hours away. I checked my clock which read 4:00 pm.

"Speaking of which, we should go out to the mall or something, do something fun like a day out," I said.

"Amazing idea girl!" Remote nudged me while smiling.

"I always have the best ideas." I shrugged with a large grin.

"We exist too." Pie pointed to herself and Pillow.

"Weren't you the one who pushed Pen's ex?"

"We do NOT talk about that."

We talked about random stuff and had a meme contest to see who could send the funniest memes. Pie obviously won because she was a "dank memer" according to her. I still have no idea what that meant but it was funny when she first said it. Laughing with my friends helped a lot with my insanity. I started to feel slightly content about things, despite the events that have been happening the past couple of days.

All of us soon left for the mall and we got there in a jiff. We didn't spend too much time looking through stores, but more time talking with one another and socializing to get our minds off the entire ordeal. We ended up eating dinner at this cool new Goikan place down the street. The restaurant served these odd things called "Yoyle Berries." They looked rather gross so we decided not to order them. Instead, we bought some steaks. The chef was Gelatin!

"Wassup guys, what can I get for you guys today!"

"First of all, we're girls, second of all, whip up four of your finest steaks." I joked.

"Coming right up! Your order number is 69

We all found a seat and we decided to play some cards. Pie always comes ready for any possible outcome when she leaves the house, so she has some cards on her. We played some poker until our food was ready.

"ORDER NUMBER 69!" Gelatin called out from the kitchen.

I went and picked up the order and we ate our steak. The steak tasted extremely good and we finished our food in about ten minutes. We wanted to get back to my apartment by 7:00 since my favorite show was airing at that time. We walked out and saw a peculiar poster on the wall of the restaurant.

"What's this?" I asked.

After closer inspection, we noticed that it was a missing poster. The person in the frame was a picture of Snowball. The poster had all of his details and a reward for anyone who finds him.

"How did Snowball go missing?" Pillow asked.

"Sucks to be him." Pie shrugged.

"What? Pie. Why are you so unsurprised by something like this?" Pillow asked again.

"I'm used to people going missing all over the place."

"Okay, we have to talk about your past when we get back to the apartment."

"Well now, I'm obliged to do so."

We got back in the car to go back to the apartment. The streets were more crowded because of work traffic and the car was much louder this time. Pie brought up the topic that Pen still sleeps with a stuffed animal. From there, we started to make fun of him and Tree for

random things. Although both of them were very nice in my opinion, they were funny sometimes and did some extremely peculiar things.

We got back to my apartment at about 6:30. I slowly creaked open the door, expecting to see the entity interact with my room. However, nothing happened. Nothing changed. Everything was normal. I sighed a breath of relief and everyone else followed me into the room behind me.

Everyone sat on my bed and started binging my favorite show. My favorite show was this cool show called "Sailor Moon". All of my friends have watched it before but never watched the series to know what the plot was about. We binge-watched the show for about three hours straight until everyone was tired.

"Wait, are you guys planning to sleep here?" I asked.

"Well, we deduced that the entity doesn't attack when there are people around," Pie smirked.

"Fine. I guess you guys can sleep here for the night." I shrugged.

I got up and realized that I didn't have enough beds for everyone. I had a single queen-sized bed and a couch. That wasn't even close enough to fit everyone. I searched the room for more things until Pie spoke.

"I can sleep on the floor if you'd like."

"But it's so uncomfortable. No?" I felt pretty bad, despite not liking Pie much.

"Trust me, Liy. I've dealt with much worse. I've been to hell and back before."

"Wow. Okay. If you say so I guess." I commented, still feeling bad for making Pie sleep on the ground.

We all got ready for bed and said our goodnights to each other. I was about to fall asleep when Remote came up to me while I was dozing off.

"Hey, Liy, can I sleep in your bed for the night? I'm scared." Remote embarassedly asked.

I raised an eyebrow and started laughing in delight.

"I'm sorry if that was weird! It's just that this entire situation is stressing me out!"

"No, No. I was laughing because I was going to say that you're always allowed in." I chuckled.

"Really? Thank you so much, Liy." Remote gave me a big hug and I fell backward on the bed.

"Aren't they just adorable together?" Pillow nudged Pie.

"Pssh. Lovebirds." Pie also slightly smiled.

"You could say that again."

We all said goodnight to each other once again. Knowing we were all safe for the night, it didn't take long until everyone was fast asleep except me. Remote was passed out with her arm around my shoulders. I blushed and admired my lover sleeping right next to me.

"Shoot! I forgot to text the others to hang out tomorrow!" I thought to myself.

Group Chat:

Liy: @Remote @Tree @Pen Wanna hang out tomorrow?

Pen: I've got nothing else to do. I'm down.

Bottle: Absolutely! :)

Tree: Sure. Where are we meeting?

Liy: I was thinking we could hang out and have fun at the nearby lake.

Tree: Sounds good. Should we bring swimsuits?

Liy: Definitely.

Bottle: Alright! See you all there!

Pen: Gn, it's late lol

I put my phone down and finally had a good night's sleep after everything. I closed my eyes and smiled to myself, knowing that I'll get a breath of fresh air tomorrow.

-

Surprise! Back at it again with an early chapter for you guys! Hope you guys like it haha. There may be some errors since I was sick when I wrote this, but I'd say it's good for the most part lol. Have a great day and stay tuned for the next chapter you all!

Chapter 20: Publishing 11/22/23

Chapter 20 - Pen

"Tree! Where are my pizza rolls?" I called from the kitchen. I had recently gone to the market to pick up groceries. I had bought all of the necessities, but all of my food seemed to continuously disappear.

"I don't know! Check the fridge!"

"I already did dude!" I replied, now slightly angry.

I walked over to Tree's room and saw him with a box in his hand. He saw me walk in and hid the box under his blanket. It was obvious as daylight that he was hiding something.

"What's that under the blanket? I'm not stupid." I rolled my eyes.

"It's my uhhhh... co-collection yeah! My new keychain collection!" Tree laughed,

"Shut up." I stared at him and removed the blanket. There they were, my entire box of pizza rolls empty. There were many crumbs on his bedsheets and a smear of sauce on his lips.

"Listen... I can explain." Tree shook and slightly chuckled.

"Okay, you're buying me more when we leave to hang out with our friends."

"Ugh. Fine. I guess it's fair."

I gave Tree a playful middle finger as I walked out of his room. I decided to instead prepare myself a protein shake for breakfast. It wasn't much, but it was usually the norm whenever I woke up since Tree claimed I was a "health freak who didn't care about anything but working out".

I drank my protein shake and called Tree down, as I was generous

enough to make him some food too.

"Tree! Get your butt down here. The fried rice is getting cold!" I called.

"FRIED RICE???"

Tree didn't even bother walking down the stairs. He straight-up jumped over the railing, despite the drop being a story. He landed safely and sprinted over to the table where I had prepared his fried rice.

"I know you can't resist the taste of my world-famous fried rice!" I boasted.

"Okay. You win. Now I REALLY have to pay for your pizza rolls huh." Tree smiled at me and kept eating.

We talked at the table for about fifteen minutes and Tree finished his meal faster than I could click on my favorite video game after it recently updated. Speaking of video games, my favorite fighting game recently had an update. I was eager to play with Tree, considering we had been doing nothing for the first couple of days of summer.

"You up for a game?" I asked, holding two controllers in my hands.

"Heck yeah! You're going down, clown." Tree boasted while walking pridefully to the couch.

We sat down and booted up the console. The update featured some new fighters Tree and I wanted to try out for ourselves. We played a couple of games together before betting on who would win the best of five games.

"Okay. If you win, you don't have to pay for my pizza rolls. If I win, you have to post an embarrassing image to your social media account. Sound fair?"

"Deal! I know you're gonna lose since you're trash at this game." Tree smiled and nudged me.

We played the first four games. The score was neck and neck, with both of us having two wins under our belts.

"Last game, Pen! Feeling nervous?" Tree smiled.

"Not at all ya bozo," I snidely replied.

We played the last game and I ended up winning. I celebrated and didn't bother shaking Tree's hand. He deserved the loss for eating my pizza rolls. Now, he had to post an embarrassing image of himself.

"Okay, Tree! You know the deal." I playfully laughed.

"Ugh. You're so damn lucky you won that."

"It's this cool thing called skill, never heard of it?" I replied.

"Shut up! You literally got lucky!" Tree denied my reply.

Tree took an embarrassing photo of himself with cat ears on. He captioned the image "Meow" and posted it. Tree showed me the image and I started laughing so hard, that my chest hurt after I was done laughing. Tree looked at his new post with a sad face and was thinking to himself why he had agreed to the bet.

Tree and I set off to where Liy told us to meet. I told Tree to drive since I beat him fair and square.

"Why does Liy want to meet at the local lake?" Tree asked.

"I swear, if we're doing some boring shit like fishing, I'm out." I rolled my eyes and laughed.

"No kidding. I hope we decide on something fun." Tree replied.

"To be fair, she did tell us to bring swimsuits so that should be a sign."

"You're right. Who am I kidding?"

We got to the lake and saw that the other parts of the lake were closed off, leaving Tree and I no other choice but to drive up a steep

hill to access the lake a different way. We drove up and saw a cliff that led into the lake below. Up top, we saw all of our other friends at the top.

"Hey, guys! We were waiting for you this whole time to arrive!" Bottle waved.

We parked our car and got out. Since Tree and I were smart enough to wear our swim clothes to the lake, we didn't have to change out. I decided not to bring a shirt and go shirtless since it was the middle of June, meaning the weather was scorching hot. Tree and I walked over to the cliff. I looked over at the lake below. I estimated the drop to be about twenty feet.

"So, who's going first?" Pillow asked.

"Wait, Pillow, aren't you supposed to be at work right now? It's a Monday." Tree asked.

"Nuh-uh. I called in sick today!" Pillow chuckled.

"In that case..."

Tree leaped off the cliff after getting a running start. He flew through the air for a couple of seconds and hit the water. We heard him rise and yell, "WOO! THAT WAS AWESOME!!" The rest of the friends followed, leaving me and Remote at the top of the cliff by ourselves.

"Pen! Jump down! It's not scary at all!" Tree called.

I braced myself for impact and jumped off the cliff. I watched as I fell at the speed of light and hit the water with a CRASH. The impact dazed me for a brief moment, but I snapped out of it and thought it was fun. We went to the shallow side of the lake and decided to start a chicken fight. Bottle WAS the chicken in the group and didn't participate in the chicken fight. I went with Tree and we started the battles. We had a blast pushing each other off the other person's shoulders. Bottle watched us play and took videos of the fun we were having.

Once we got bored of chicken fights, we started splashing each other in the lake. I splashed Tree and we started getting each other soaked.

Remote was sunbathing on the side and watched us splash each other. I could tell she wished she could have fun with us if it wasn't for her fear of water and her noticeable bandage on her stomach. I didn't question her about how she got the wound, but it seemed big enough to the point where she had to use a large, wrap-around bandage. I ignored it and kept splashing Tree. Meanwhile, the girls were underwater looking for creatures in the river.

"I feel something on my leg!" Liy laughed.

"It's a turtle!" Bottle yelped in surprise.

Pie picked up the turtle and examined it. The turtle was small, but still decently sized to the point where Pie had to use both arms to pick it up. While they hunted for more turtles, Tree and I did a breath-holding contest to see who could hold their breath the longest.

"You ready?" I motioned under the water.

Tree nodded and we started. Tree was a strong swimmer, so he was used to holding his breath. However, I was a fair fight for him since I was naturally athletic. We continued for over two minutes until I got tired and went up for air. I tapped Tree on the head, telling him that he won. He raised his head above water and I knew he would gloat.

"Looks like I'm the better breath-holder!" Tree laughed and pointed at me.

"C'mon, dude! You're a seasoned swimmer unlike me!" I laughed along.

Tree put me in a headlock and started wrestling me in the water. I wrestled him back and we continued to fight until both of us were tired.

We went back to the shore where Remote was sunbathing. Tree decided to wake her up by scaring her.

"WAKE UPPPP!" Tree yelled, right over her.

"AHHHHHHH" Remote screamed in fear.

"That was too funny." Tree started to hysterically laugh at Remote.

"No, it wasn't!" Remote defended herself.

"Whatever."

We were met with the girls and we were all exhausted after having so much fun in the lake. All the girls greeted Remote and Pie showed her the turtle. Remote flinched at the turtle, being scared of sea creatures too, but she thought the turtle was cute, so she managed and held it for a while.

All of us sat on the rocks next to the lake. We admired the beauty of the lake and were extremely grateful to have a moment like this with each other. Remote was lying on the beach towel she brought and I caught Tree staring.

"Tree, what are you doing?" I spoke with force.

Tree turned away and started whistling. I chuckled to myself and gave myself a pat on the back for saving my best friend from getting slapped by Liy. I had found out she and Remote were a thing a day ago via text. Although this was out of nowhere, I saw this coming, as the two always got along extremely well.

I glanced over at Pillow, who was searching through her backpack.

"Whatcha looking for, Pillow?" I asked with a raised eyebrow.

"Nothing. Nothing," Pillow shrugged me off.

I saw her pick up a piece of paper and start reading it. I looked at the newspaper she was reading and the title caught me off guard. I continued to read from behind her and saw that the article she was reading was about the disappearances of people and tragic events that happened in the past couple of decades.

91 people missing after signing a petition to demolish graveyard to build a factory

The petition to get rid of an abandoned gravesite this year has surfaced. According to many citizens of Goiky, there have been 91 confirmed

disappearances around town, which is five times the national average per day. These disappearances have all been linked to a petition to get rid of an abandoned graveyard. It has been said that everyone who signed the petition "left" the city after 24 hours. The missing participants have yet to be found after five months.

"Man, 1945 has been an odd year." Says one passerby we interviewed.

I stopped reading and asked Pillow about this.

"Pillow-"

"AHH- Don't scare me like that, Pen!" Pillow glared at me.

"Sorry, sorry. Why are you reading about this?" I asked with curiosity taking over.

"Come with me, I'll tell you in private." Pillow motioned me to come farther away from everyone.

"Can I bring Tree? He doesn't know what you're talking about either." I asked.

"Sure."

I brought Tree over with Pillow and she told us everything that she went through ever since we went to Teardrop's graduation. She told us about the sudden increase of terrible nightmares she had been having for the past couple of days and a mention of something "attacking" her during her summer job. What she told us seemed too unbelievable to be true. Tree and I didn't believe her at first, but she told us to come by her house tomorrow, as she claimed she had lots of proof that we were being haunted. We agreed to visit her house since all the others would be coming too to hang out.

We continued to chat when the others came up and asked what we were talking about. Pillow told them everything and how she suspected that there was definitely something haunting them and that she had gathered lots of information about the topic and gathered all of it at her house.

I drove Tree and me to Pillow's house and we parked inside her

already-open garage. We waited by the house, as we didn't have the key. The others all pulled up to the house and got out. Pillow led us all inside and told us to go to her room. Her dad was on the couch drinking coffee.

"Hello, Mr. Fluffen!" I waved.

"Why hello, Pen! Long time no see!" The handsome man waved back. "I see you've brought the gang too!"

"Yep! This guy here ate all my food so he's gonna pay the price when we get home!" I laughed while pointing at Tree, who was unsatisfied for ratting him out.

"Now now, I'm sure Tree didn't know they were yours." Pillow's dad chuckled.

"Yeah, Pen! How was I supposed to know!" Tree gave me a deadeye.

I laughed before Pillow told me to come to her room. I waved to Mr. Fluff once again before leaving. He was a really nice guy. I wish my dad was that nice.

We walked into Pillow's room and saw some unusual things. Her walls had missing posters, newspapers, and a map of the town.

"What kinda cursed ass history project is this?" I insensitively asked.

"Shut up, Pen, don't act like you didn't fail history in 9th grade." Pie defended Pillow.

"We do NOT talk about that."

"Woah! What are all these posters?" Bottle asked.

"Just some research I've been doing about this entire thing."

"Say what now?" Bottle innocently asked.

Pie whispered to her what Pillow was talking about. Bottle immediately understood what she was talking about.

We looked around the room for a good ten minutes until we decided to all go back home. Pillow told us that her car needed to charge, so I offered to drive everyone home in my car. Luckily, my car was larger than average and could easily hold seven people. I made a bet with Tree at the house and the loser had to walk home. I won the bet of who could do more pushups in a row without folding. Pillow didn't like it much, but we continued the contest anyway.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TREE

Fuck. How did I lose that bet to Pen? In gym class, I would always beat Pen at bets like those. However, today, I felt more tired than usual since I didn't sleep much last night. I had stayed up all night the previous night playing games and eating snacks. Now, I had to walk about ten minutes back home. What a day.

I walked for a couple more minutes until I saw an odd-looking house. The house looked abandoned, with the windows boarded up, the wood falling off the structure, and the front yard covered in weeds and scrap metal. I ignored it and kept walking, but the house let off a bad vibe. However, I felt my energy decreasing rapidly after walking away. Since I was diagnosed with diabetes a year ago, I had to carry around a bottle of insulin pills with me. I pulled the insulin pills out of my pocket, but I lost grip and dropped the bottle on the floor. The cap unscrewed itself and a couple of pills scattered across the sidewalk. I groaned and bent down to pick them up.

I started to pick up the pills. I was about to grab the last one when before I could grab the pill, someone grabbed it before me, confused, I looked up and saw a clown. The clown wore a pair of baggy trousers and a long, white shirt. It had red hair and blood splattered on its clothes. I looked up in horror, almost frozen in shock.

"I believe this belongs to you!" The clown happily laughed while handing me the pill.

I jumped back in fright and stared back up at the clown, slowly crawling away while the clown slowly walked toward me. I soon got my senses back together and ran. When I said ran, I meant it. I didn't bother taking the pill and I could only go one way, towards the house. The clown chased me into the house's backyard as I continued

to run. I ran so hard my lungs started to burn and I felt like I was going to throw up. The clown was unnaturally fast, and I had trouble keeping my distance.

After running through the backyard for about twenty seconds, I came across a metal fence. I turned back around to see the same clown standing about thirty feet away from me, next to the house.

"Hey, Tree! Where are you going? Would you like to have some fun? I promise I won't hurt you!" The clown laughed at me. Its eyes stared directly into my soul as it held up a balloon animal. I was too afraid to speak and just stared at the evil creature, breathing heavily as it kept laughing. I put my foot on the fence and saw that there was a small hole in the fence, just large enough for me to squeeze through. I took the risk and started crawling under the fence.

"Tree! Wait up! We haven't had any playtime yet!" I heard the clown cackle.

I made it through the fence and looked behind me. The clown had disappeared without a trace. All that was left was a bright blue balloon animal lying in the grass of the house. I made it back to the front area of the house and started running like I had never before. I checked my phone to see how fast my heart was beating. 260 bpm. I knew that I had to take my pills soon, so I opened the bottle while running, not daring to ever stop for anything. I popped a couple of pills in my mouth and kept running. I finally made it back to my house. I saw Pen's car parked inside the garage.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PEN

I saw Tree open the door to my house.

"Hi, Tree! You got back fast! You have a gaming session or something?"

Tree didn't answer and went straight to his room. I was confused as to why Tree ignored me like that. I could recall him walking through the door, sweating as if he'd just run a marathon. Weird. I shrugged it off and made myself a bagel. I had to have some cheat days at some point. I ate my bagel and continued watching TV.

It had been an hour since Tree came out of his room. At this point, I was slightly worried about Tree since he had never acted like this before. I sighed and walked over to his room. I knocked on his bedroom door.

"Tree? You okay man?" I asked, slightly worried.

"I'm fine," Tree said from his bedroom, sounding extremely tired and stressed.

"Dude, you don't sound good at all? Mind if I come in for a moment?"

"No. Leave me alone." Tree grudgingly told me off.

"Tree, something's up. If you need anything, I'll be right downstairs." I let Tree have some space.

Another hour passed and Tree's bedroom door opened.

"Pen, can you come into my room? I need to tell you something." Tree anxiously asked.

"Absolutely!"

I walked up to his room and saw him sitting on his bed. He had tears in his eyes and his arm was shaking.

"Oh, my god dude. You look like you just saw a ghost. Everything alright?" I asked, now very worried.

Tree nodded his head. I patted him on the back and told Tree to relax. I went down and made him some tea and gave him an ice pack to keep him cold since he looked extremely hot. After a bit of tending to him, he finally talked to me.

"Pen, I saw... something." Tree's voice shook. I had never heard Tree sound this scared before.

"What did you see?" I calmly asked, now shaking myself.

Tree told me the events of what had happened when I made him walk home. The whole time, I stared at Tree, wide-eyed. I blamed

myself for making Tree walk home that day.

"FUCK! Why am I such a bad friend?" I clenched my fist and grabbed my hair.

I started to cry and put my head inside the crook of my legs. Tree patted me on the back.

"Pen, it's not your fault. You didn't know that would happen."

"Yes, it is. I'm the worst friend ever." I slammed my fist onto the bed.

Tree argued with me, telling me that it was okay. No, it wasn't. I felt like the biggest pile of shit for making my friend go through something. Knowing Tree was terrified of clowns, I could only imagine if I were in his shoes, facing my biggest fear head-on, at the risk of my own life and sanity. I continued weeping with Tree comforting me as I kept beating myself up.

-

Hello, my viewers! This was a true nail-biter of a chapter! Hope you guys enjoyed this one. I've been getting some requests for Treehole and astrobiology chapters, if you're one of those people, you're in luck! The next chapter WILL have some of that in it. Thanks!

-

Soo, just a heads-up for you guys, chapters may be slightly delayed since I can't type as fast anymore. I broke my hand today and I'm wearing a cast on one of my hands, meaning I can't type even close to as fast haha. Luckily, it's my non -dominant hand, but it'll be more difficult for me to pump out chapters for the next couple of weeks. Thanks for understanding guys!

Chapter 21: Publishing 11/24/23

Chapter 21 - Tree

I woke up the next morning extremely groggy. I still feel very bad for Pen. Why was he so harsh on himself over something he never did? Despite living with him for the past couple of years, I had never seen him that intense over something like that. There have been.

I went back to sleep since I was tired as hell from running so hard the day before. That's when I got a text message from Black Hole. Strange. He never texted me for the longest time.

Private DMs:

Black Hole: Hey Tree! It's been a while since we've hung out. Are you free to come over to my place today?

Tree: Yeah! What time are you thinking?

Black Hole: Idk, when are you free?

Tree: Well, I'm free all day, but I can come over as early as 10 in the morning lol

Black Hole: Sure! I'm free by 10 too. See ya then!

Tree: You too!

I felt my cheeks heat up. "Is it getting hot in here?" I asked myself. I took off my long sleeve and put a T-shirt on instead. I chuckled to myself and changed into some more casual clothes like shorts and high-top Js. I walked out of my room and saw Pen gaming on our console.

"Pen, Black hole invited me over to his house. I'll be gone for a couple of hours."

"OK, Tree, stay safe. Have fun!" Pen softly smiled at me and waved

me off.

I left the house and went over to Black Hole's house. Since we lived in the same neighborhood, I decided to save on gas money and bike to his house instead. Instead of pedaling the shorter route, which went through the house where I got attacked, I took the longer route around the entire block. However, this route was only a couple of minutes longer than the initial route I would've taken.

Black Hole's house was huge. I could see his room from the front of the house. His walls were decorated with stars and greenish-blue lights were emitting from the window. I walked up to the house and rang the doorbell. I patiently waited by the house for Black Hole to answer. Black Hole opened the door and greeted me with his usual smile.

"Hey, Tree! Come on in dude!" Black Hole smiled while we did our "secret handshake".

I smiled at Black Hole and walked in. His house looked the same as it was when he first invited me over to his house four years ago. Since he lived alone, he didn't bother making many modifications to the house.

"So, why did you text to hang out?" I nicely asked.

"Oh, I have a huge surprise for my first friend." Black Hole elbowed me with a huge smile.

I smiled at him and asked what it was.

"Put this blindfold on."

Black Hole led me outside. I could hear something, but I couldn't lay a finger on what the sound exactly was.

"Okay! Take off the blindfold!"

I opened my eyes to see a brand-new car. I used to always use Pen's car for transportation. I never thought I would ever need a car a day in my life. Besides the point, I was wide-eyed. Black Hole had bought me an electric car, which was on the pricier side of cars.

"Oh my gosh! Thank you so much! What's the occasion?" I asked, having many questions about this entire thing.

"You think I would forget your birthday?" Black Hole smiled.

"But my birthday is in three weeks!"

"Yeah, but during your birthday, I'm visiting family.

"Where?"

"Saturn."

"Typical Black Hole," I laughed at him.

"Yeah, supposedly, I'm departing in a week."

"Lemme guess, you don't need a spaceship since you're "so cool." I rolled my eyes.

"You're exactly right. You're the only person who knows that I can breathe in space and travel through space myself."

"Why don't you use any of your powers here on Earth?"

"I'm too lazy," Black Hole smugly stated.

"Wow."

We shared a laugh and decided to take the car for a spin.

I hopped in the car and instantly felt the sheer speed of the car. It felt like I was going through a time machine in real life. The fact I was driving my car astonished me.

"Hey, Black Hole, why did you get me such an expensive gift? It's only my birthday!" I felt like I was being too greedy taking such a generous gift from my friend.

"Well, you were the first friend I ever had. Despite my popularity at high school, I owe all my life successes to you. You recognized me when I had nothing, so now, I wanna give you everything." Black Hole replied.

"Geez, you really didn't have to though!"

"But I wanted to. There's no arguing with that isn't there."

"Why do you seem to make fair points only when I'm around?"

"I always make fair points, perhaps you're too oblivious to see that." Black Hole laughed to himself.

"Shush."

Black Hole and I decided that we would go get lunch at this cool new place in the city square. We drove to the other part of Goiky and Black Hole booked us a reservation at the fanciest steakhouse known to mankind. This place was called "Gelatin's Steakhouse". I had never heard of it, but I heard that the food there is top-tier.

We pulled into the parking lot and Black Hole congratulated me on the driving. To be fair, I was surprised that Black Hole could even fit inside the car, being about 6 feet 7 inches tall. We walked inside the restaurant together. Black Hole would order since he was more sociable than I was and I would find us a good seat. I found us the perfect seat right next to the windowsill. I watched Black Hole order our food. He seemed like such a natural at socializing with people. I remember when I first met him, he was always depressed and walked around school with his head down and no friends. I contrasted the change in him within the time of four years. I started to blush as he smirked at the man behind the counter and even gave him a tip.

Black Hole came back to the table and he stared at me with a confused expression.

"Tree, you okay? Your face is rather red dude," He asked, concerned.

"Yeah, I'm f-fine." I instantly turned away and pretended to check my phone. He shrugged and sat down.

"So, Tree, whatcha up to lately?" Black Hole started the conversation.

"Nothing much. But there's something rather alarming I must tell you.

"Oh? What's that?" Black Hole curiously asked.

I told Black Hole the details of what my friends and I were experiencing. At first, he didn't believe me, but he started to slowly believe me after I started to explain the events of yesterday when I got chased by an unknown entity. He raised an eyebrow. It was clear he didn't believe me, but since I was his friend, he wanted to.

"That must be scary as shit man," Black Hole showed sympathy.

"Yeah, it's scary and all, but it's my friends that I'm more scared of. Imagine if Pen was put in a situation like that, or someone as fragile as Bottle. Scary."

"Well, I'd like to hear some details about this thing," Black Hole now sounded intrigued.

"I'll tell you more when I have more information about this," I noted.

"Look Tree, if you ever need someone or somewhere safe, I'm always open bro." Black Hole smiled.

"Thank you so much, Black Hole. You're the best friend ever," I grinned.

Black Hole and I proceeded to eat our food and talk to each other. I didn't want Black Hole to know that I had feelings for him. I was going to confess tonight, but I was too scared of rejection and ended up not doing it. I looked at my watch, which read 1:30.

"Tree?"

"Yeah?"

"Would you like to watch a movie today? There's this slasher movie that seems super cool," Black Hole said.

"Sure man! I'd be delighted to see a movie with you!" I answered. I regretted saying it since it was so corny.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PEN

"Where has Tree been?" I wondered. He had been gone for the past

two and a half hours with Black Hole. Sure, I knew that Tree had feelings for him, but what was he doing out this long? I figured that Tree confessed to Black Hole and got rejected. I laughed at the thought, but I knew that Black Hole couldn't reject Tree, as Tree was one of the coolest people I've met in a while.

I heard the doorbell ring and saw the mailman drop off some mail. I walked outside, opened the mailbox, and found something. It was... a note? I brought the note inside my house and read the front of the envelope. The front read, "To: Pen. From: Secret Admirer". Upon reading the first couple of words on the front, I was confused. Who would send me something like this? Especially now. I went to go read this in the bathroom so if Tree were to suddenly come home, he wouldn't see me reading the letter. I went inside the bathroom, locked the door, and sat on the ground. I eagerly peeled back the adhesive and started to read the envelope.

Dear Pen,

I wanted to send you a note to let you know how much I admire you. I love absolutely every quality of you. You're kind, cool, nice, playful, trustworthy, and overall an easy person to get along with. You may not know me, but that's not important. I know this note is a surprise considering the fact you're getting this now and the fact you have an admirer, but I can't help but tell you how cool you are. I don't expect anything in return from you, but I hope you consider this in how you picture yourself. Keep rocking man!

-Anonymous :)

I finished reading the note with glee until I heard a random voice.

"Pen..." The voice spoke with a raspy tone. It sounded like a child about the age of seven.

I looked around me, swearing I was hearing things. I shrugged it off and ignored it for the most part, as I thought I was imagining things. That's when I heard another voice.

"Pen..."

Now, I was sure that there was an unknown presence around me. "Who's there?" I answered. I got up and looked all around me, but the door was locked and no one was in the bathroom with me.

"Down here..."

I heard the voice come from my bathroom's shower drain. I walked over to my shower drain and looked down the sinkhole that led to the sewer system.

"Help me... Please."

I put my eye closer to the drain, but the drain was too dark to see down.

"Hello? Who are you?" I peered down the drain.

"I'm lost... Please help... Help me..." The voice continued to speak.

"How can I help?" I asked the voice, skeptical about what dangers lurked.

"Grab my hand..."

Since the drain was wide enough for an arm to go down, I decided to take the cover off the drain of the shower, revealing a giant pipe that led down to the sewer system. I reached my hand down the pipe when all of a sudden, I felt a hand. It felt... human. I felt the hand grab mine, but there was no way that I could pull the person out of the drain. That's when I felt a sharp pain in my hand. I quickly retracted my hand out of the pipe and saw that something cut my finger. It wasn't a small cut, just enough to draw blood.

"What was that for?" I asked the voice, looking down the drain.

"Ha ha ha..." The voice started to laugh. "Thank you, BEN! HAHAHHAHAHAHHAHHAHA!"

That's when I saw some loose hair shoot out of the pipe. It latched onto my arm and started to drag me down. The hair then latched onto my other arm, then my leg, wrapped around my neck. I got pulled closer to the drain and tried to break free, but the tied hair

acted like a rope, meaning I couldn't escape.

"Now, you'll REALLY see what it's like to be underground!" The voice, now ecstatic, said.

That's when mud shot out of the drain. The mud coated the entirety of my bathroom and lots of brown, viscous liquid coated my body. The ropes of hair let go after the mud flowed from the pipe for about a minute. Although I wasn't chained to the bathroom pipe, the room started to fill with mud fast. I tried to run out the door, but the door was jammed. The knob wouldn't turn at all. I had to think of something, fast. That's when I got an idea. I looked outside the window while the floor was covered in mud. I looked outside to see Marker, Stapy, and Foldy. Although I didn't have anything useful, I did have an idea. I went over the pipe and unscrewed the showerhead from the shower. It popped off and I carried it to the window. I proceeded to break the window with the showerhead, but the window was too small for me to crawl out of. However, to my luck, Stapy noticed the broken window. I heard the friends talk to each other from inside.

"What was that?" Stapy asked, concerned.

"I don't know, but it sounds like someone needs help," Foldy worriedly stated.

"We gotta go check that out," Stapy replied.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: THIRD PERSON

Marker, Stapy, and Foldy all rushed to the front door of Pen's house. Stapy was strong, so he managed to break down the door by running full speed into it. The three quickly dashed inside the house.

"Upstairs!" Stapy pointed.

The three continued to run upstairs and found the source of Pen's screaming. Marker tried to open the knob, but the door wouldn't budge. Stapy also tried to break down the door but to no avail. The three could hear Pen screaming.

"Pen! We'll get you out of there!" Foldy yelled.

Foldy went back downstairs to find something to break down the door with. She stumbled across the house's garage, where she found a baseball bat. Foldy scurried back up the stairs with the bat in hand. She handed it to Stapy, who started taking swings at the door.

BANG

BANG

SLAM

CRACK

The door finally fell after multiple swings of the bat. The three saw Pen in the bathroom, but they didn't know why he was screaming.

"PEN PEN! ARE YOU OKAY?" Foldy worriedly asked.

"Why are you screaming?" Stapy asked, concerned.

"Thank you guys for saving me." Pen sighed in relief. The other three raised an eyebrow while looking at him.

"You guys don't see it?" Pen asked, covered in mud.

"See what?" Marker questioned.

"Did we really just waste our time for this?" Stapy asked.

"Stapy! Don't be insensitive. Maybe he had a panic attack. Pen, how are you feeling now?" Foldy bent down to Pen, who was propped against a wall, lying against the drywall.

"You guys don't see the mess in the room?" Pen asked, sweating.

"No?"

"C'mon guys, let's go," Stapy grudgingly stated.

Foldy was hesitant to leave, still concerned about Pen, but she didn't know why Pen was so scared, and she didn't know what he was talking about when he said "mess". The room looked spotless to them.

"Foldy!"

"Coming!"

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PEN

I looked at the bathroom. Everything was ruined. There was mud all over the walls, floor, and ceiling. The countertop was filled with gross, brown liquid, and I looked like I had fallen into a toilet. "Why couldn't they see the mess?" I asked myself. I thought I was insane because according to Stapy, none of the three members could see anything in the room. I walked outside the bathroom and got my phone. I texted Tree about what had happened. I thought I had an encounter with the thing that attacked Tree yesterday, but that seemed rather unlikely.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TREE

I was having the time of my life hanging out with Black Hole. He was so charming. He knew exactly what movies I liked and he took me to see one. I considered myself lucky to have a friend like Black Hole. I wanted to confess to him that I loved him, but the fear of rejection took over me.

We found our seats in the cinema. Black Hole had booked me front-row seats to the movie, which was rather difficult because the movie we watched had just been released yesterday.

"Hey, Tree, want a sour patch kid?" Black Hole asked me.

"Sure! I used to love these growing up."

We ate snacks together during the movie and I enjoyed every second of it. In the middle of the film, Black Hole fell asleep and I looked at him. He looked so cute while he was in a deep slumber. I took a quick picture of him and continued watching. He woke up after a couple of minutes and saw me watching. He put an arm around my shoulder while we watched. I felt myself blush yet again. God, I gotta stop doing that.

The movie ended and I left the cinema with Black Hole.

"Man, that was a good movie, right?" Black Hole asked me with a smile.

"Yup! I loved the ending." I answered, also with a smile. "Plus, didn't you sleep through some of it?"

"I still saw the ending," Black Hole ruffled my hair. Being 6 feet 7 inches, he reached down with ease.

I thought this was the perfect time to confess, as we were in front of the cinema and there was a beautiful sight next to us.

"Hey, Black Hole?"

"Yeah? Wassup Tree?"

"I-I-I" I started to blush.

"Dude it's cool. Spit it out. I won't judge." Black Hole smiled lightly.

"I... Like you. Like more than a friend type of way." I started to turn crimson now.

"Oh!" Black Hole put a hand over his mouth and started to laugh while slightly blushing.

I felt like he was laughing at my stupidity. I knew he would reject me. I clenched my fist and forced a smile.

"So... I'm guessing you don't like me back," I stared at him, with a tear in my eye.

"What? No! I was laughing since I was just about to tell you first," Black Hole continued to laugh.

"Soo, you like me? Really?" I asked, now intrigued.

"Yup."

I hugged Black Hole and asked if I could kiss him. He chuckled and bent down to my level. I kissed him on the cheek and I could see him slightly blush. His purple blush dusted across his face and I smiled at

him.

"I love you, Black Hole."

"I love you too, Tree," Black Hole, now more serious, implied.

That's when my phone rang. I saw a message from Pen.

Pen: TREE GET HOME RIGHT NOW ITS AN EMERGENCY

Oh shit. I told Black Hole that Pen had an emergency at home. He instantly took me back to my car and this time, he took the wheel, driving about ten miles over the speed limit on our way home. He rolled me out of the car and parked it on the curb. He waited in the car in case we needed him. I opened the door and saw muddy footprints everywhere in the house. I was confused by this until I heard Pen's voice from upstairs.

"Tree! Help!"

I darted upstairs to the bathroom, where I saw one of the worst sights ever.

"WHAT THE FUCK???"

-

Hello, my readers! Surprisingly, I was able to finish this chapter on time haha. Writing with a broken hand isn't easy in the slightest. As a result, I had to improvise. I found a way to type with only the tips of my fingers on my left hand hahaha. Although it's slower, it works slightly better. Since this isn't as fast, don't be surprised if my chapters are slightly late. If they are, I apologize in advance for the inconvenience. Thanks guys! Plus, HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!

Chapter 22: Publishing 11/26/23

Chapter 22 - Bottle

WARNING: SEXUAL ASSAULT AND DEPICTIONS OF VIOLENCE

The nightmares keep coming back. I can't sleep despite taking sleeping pills. Why is this happening to me? What did I do to deserve a fate like this? It's like my dreams somehow know my biggest fear and use it against me every night. I've done nothing but be nice to others. Why is something like this happening to me only?

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TREE

I walked up the stairs to see Pen in the bathroom. The bathroom was drenched in some brown, viscous liquid. It smelled like the outside and I saw Pen huddled in the corner of the bathroom, seemingly clutching his head. It took me a moment to process the sight, but that's when Pen lifted his head and asked me one question.

"Can you see it?"

I squinted at him like he was high, as the bathroom was thrashed and it was clear as day something went wrong. I nodded and told him of course I could see it, but he asked if he was crazy. I was still processing what had happened when I had an idea. I would call all of the friends over to prove if Pen was indeed crazy, or if I was too. I decided that it was worth a shot to prove if we were insane.

Group Chat:

Tree: @everyone We have an emergency. Come to my house, asap

Bottle: What? Why

Tree: No time to explain. Just come, please

Pie: coming with Pillow

Liy: I'll drive Remote and Bottle

Tree: Thanks

"Don't worry, Pen, they're coming now." I knelt to Pen.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: BOTTLE

Liy sped down the highway, as I looked out the window, contemplating why Tree would need us so urgently. Did he get injured? Did something happen? The possibilities were endless. I was shaking in the car. Remote tried to calm me down, but I was too scared. I don't know what's wrong with me. I'm the most jumpy in the group, so I'm surprised some "manifestation" hasn't shown up to me yet.

We arrived at the house shortly and saw the front door wide open. I noticed Black Hole parked in a car outside, but I ignored him. We were met with Pie and Pillow at the front. We all walked in and Tree showed us why it was an emergency. All five of us looked at the bathroom in distraught. The entire bathroom was coated in a thick, brown substance. Pen himself was covered too. His hair was all muddy, his clothes were stained, and he looked like he walked straight out of a chocolate fountain.

"Holy shit, what happened here?" Pie asked.

"You guys can see this right?" Tree asked us all.

"Are you slow? How can we not see this?" Pie rolled her eyes.

That's when I saw Pen on the ground, with a large frown on his face. I bent down and asked if he was okay.

"Guys, I think this thing is getting stronger." Pen looked up at us, exhausted.

"Tell us the details later. We gotta clean this up." Liy remarked.

Tree was already starting on the cleaning as Liy said.

"No, No, it's okay. I just needed confirmation that Pen and I weren't

crazy. You guys can leave now."

"Who the hell do you think we are? We're helping." Pie sassily replied.

We got to work cleaning the bathroom. Pen helped too. It took us half an hour to clean everything off the walls, ceiling, and floor.

"Pillow, what are you doing?"

"Oh, I'm wiping the windows, why?"

"With a mop?"

"That's not what it's used for?"

"You're such an idiot. How did you graduate High School?

We finally finished the cleaning. Pen showered in Tree's bathroom in the meantime. We were all rather tired from cleaning and decided to call it a day. That's when we all decided to leave. We scheduled a time to hang out tomorrow because Pillow wanted to show us something at her house.

"Wait, Pillow?"

"Yeah?"

"Once again, why aren't you at work at the library?"

"Oh, I made a deal with the librarian. I work from home now, helping people find books on the web."

"You're so lazy it's unreal."

I waved goodbye to Tree, Pen, Pie, and Pillow. Liy drove Remote and me back to our respective homes to hang out. I didn't want to go home. My dad was a psycho and I hated going home, which is why I always stayed at my friends' houses. I sadly got out of the car and waved my friends goodbye.

I walked through the door and was instantly met with my dad. He

was holding a packet of weed and a bottle of hard liquor.

"Hey, Bottley!" My dad grinned as I walked inside the house.

"Hello, Dad," I reluctantly stated, trying not to make him mad.

"How's my little angel doing?"

"Good, Dad."

My dad then proceeded to grab my head. He bent down and smelled my hair. He let out a sigh of relief as he pushed me aside and kept walking. I hated my dad. He was always super weird, had a drinking problem, and invited random women over to the house every week. I ran to our bathroom and broke down. I brought some scissors with me and started cutting my hair. My dad always wanted me to be a boy when I was growing up. Ever since my little brother died from a heart attack, my dad hasn't been the same. I started to snip at my hair, every cut making me whimper, as I didn't want to do this, but I was forced to. I thought that this would make my dad less weird towards me. I cut my hair about three inches shorter until it looked like something a boy would sport.

I left the bathroom and tried to sneak out of the house to escape somewhere else. That's when something caught the corner of my eye. I saw a small figure run down to the basement. It wore a green T-shirt and suspenders. I saw it run down to the basement and I followed it. That's when I saw something I thought I would never see. My brother was at the bottom of the stairs where he stared me dead in the eyes.

"Bottle! I'm so sorry I had to leave." "Can you hug me? I'm scared."

Was this real? This couldn't be real. I was seeing my dead brother right in front of my eyes in my own house. I didn't respond to any of his questions.

"Bottle. Why no talk?"

"Please, can you hug me?"

I wanted to comfort him so badly, but the logical part of my brain

told me this was a trap. That's when my "brother" laid down on his back. He started to rapidly convulse before turning into a tall, lean figure. The figure looked just like a street lamp. Its long and gangly limbs stretched all around his body. His eyes shone blood red and he smiled at me.

"COME HERE BOTTLE!"

The figure darted at me with tremendous speed. I ran back up the basement stairs as the monster tried to bite my leg. Luckily, the monster missed, only leaving a small scrape on my ankle. I kept running and shut the door to the basement. I could hear the sounds of my little brother laughing as I ran away.

I found the door, only to see my dad again, this time with something in his hand.

"Where are you going darling?" My dad smiled an evil smirk.

"Hanging out with some friends, why?" I asked.

"Boys? You KNOW you're always going to be mine, and mine only."

My dad walked up to me and grabbed my wrist.

"So tell me, Bottley! Are you still my little girl?" He clenched tighter, now constricting my arm.

"NO! I'M NOT YOUR LITTLE GIRL! STAY AWAY!"

I ran away to the living room, slipping on a beer bottle. My dad closed the distance between us and got on top of me. I screamed out loud and tried to break out of his grasp, but he was too strong.

"Those boys... They don't know that you're mine. And only mine." My dad smiled and started laughing.

I managed to slip my foot loose from his grasp and kicked my dad straight in the nuts. He winced in pain, giving me time to land another blow. I proceeded to land another kick, this time to his face. I took the opportunity to sprint away. I locked myself in the bathroom and tried to find something to defend myself with. I found

a hairdryer in my cabinet. I armed myself with it and hid behind the door.

I heard my dad walking down the hallway.

"Bottley! Come out! I'm not mad. I just wanna talk."

He came over to the bathroom door when I suddenly accidentally bumped my elbow against the wall. "Good going, Bottle! You're so dumb." My dad's footsteps got louder and came to the door. He tried twisting the knob open, but I locked it from the inside. That's when my dad kicked down the door with force. Luckily, since he was drunk, he didn't see me behind the door. I jumped out and bashed him over the head with the hairdryer, knocking him out cold. Blood started to pool on the floor and I snuck away. While I was sneaking away, I saw a reflection in the mirror. The same thing in the basement gave me a thumbs-up and disappeared without a trace.

I sprinted out of the house, crying. I had knocked my own dad out. Although he sexually assaulted me multiple times, he was still my dad. I ran for a couple of blocks before collapsing on the ground from exhaustion.

Tonight, I wouldn't go back home no matter what. Although I had some money, I didn't have much. I walked the streets of Goiky and saw a couple of missing posters of Snowball. I still pondered on what had happened to the kid. I remembered him from high school, how he was one of the biggest jocks and bullies there. It astounded me that he was friends with Pen, who was a rather nice kid. Although Pen was a jock too, he was a nice jock. He just had bad friends growing up. I walked around City Square for a bit before I saw a familiar face. It was Fanny, but she was... crying? I rubbed my eyes to see if I wasn't seeing things, but she was indeed crying. I decided to walk up to her and ask what was wrong.

I walked up to Fanny and she stared back at me.

"Hey, Fanny, are you okay?" I bent down to her level.

"What does it look like? I got kicked out of the house, I'm homeless, and my boyfriend is missing."

"Can't you stay with Bubble? She's your friend after all," I asked.

"NO! Bubble hates me! I can see why. I was so mean to everyone, including her, in high school."

I forgot about the fact Snowball and Fanny were dating. I put my arm around her and she continued to sob. I remembered how reckless and mean she was to others back in high school, but no one deserved something like this. I comforted her and told her what had just happened.

Fanny proceeded to tell me all about her life. This is when I started feeling sorry for her, as she grew up in a bad environment, which made her the way she was. I could do nothing but listen and feel sorry for her.

The rest of the night was spent with Fanny and me walking around the city square, talking with one another about various topics. We decided to go eat at a local restaurant, which was on the less expensive side.

We made our way inside the restaurant, and that's when I got a text from the group chat.

Group Chat:

Pillow: Guys! I think I cracked the code. We can end this shit once and for all!

Pen: What did you find?

Pillow: It would be best for you guys to come over and see for yourselves.

Tree: Alright, let's hang out.

Pie: Fuck, my car's engine isn't starting soo

Bottle: That's okay! We all have bikes, right?

Tree: That'd actually be a splendid idea

Remote: Agreed, let's all bike over to Pillow's house tomorrow

Liy: Sure bae, I'll see you there

Remote: Haha

Pie: Make out some other time, not in the GC

Liy: Shut up

Pillow: Alright! I'm excited to show you guys this. We'll probably be done with all of this once and for all.

Bottle: Sounds like a plan!

Pillow has always had these meetings of hers, and I slightly liked it, but at the same time, I didn't. Sure, the nightmares sucked, but they were easy to deal with. The problem was that the monster could actually cause bodily harm and seemed to target only us.

Fanny noticed I was spacing out and got worried.

"Bottle! Bottle! Are you okay?"

"Wha- yeah, yeah, I'm fine."

We ate at the diner and got out quickly. I would go home, but I wouldn't dare go back home. It was likely that my dad was awake by now, and I was scared of what he would do to me if he ever found me again. Fanny offered to walk home with me.

"What happened to the Fanny I knew in high school? Always picking on people and acting tough?"

"That Fanny is long gone," Fanny responded nonchalantly.

I made it home and looked through the window. All of the lights were out and I could still hear my dad's radio playing through the window. I remembered the events and hesitated to go in. I had told Fanny what had gone down at my house, so she understood.

"Hey, I can ask Pie if we could spend the night."

"I don't think Pie likes me much," Fanny frowned.

"She might be a bit stubborn, but what's the worst that could happen?" I asked.

"You're right.

Since I lived relatively close to Pie, it didn't take long for us to make it there. It was about 7 in the evening, and Pie told me her parents were out of town for the next week. We came over to the house, but I forgot to tell Pie that Fanny would be staying too. I knocked on the door and Pie opened it.

"Hey Bottle, what brings you here?" Pie asked, deadpan.

"I'll tell you the details inside. I just need a place to sleep tonight," I sheepishly smiled.

"Alright, come i- wait... what is she doing here?"

"Oh, she got evicted from her house from her parents. I was wondering if she could stay the night."

Pie rolled her eyes and lit a cigarette. She smoked it inside the house since her parents weren't home.

"So? Why did she want to come to MY house?" Pie grudgingly asked.

"See, Bottle, I knew Pie wouldn't want me here." Fanny sighed.

"Pie, can you please let her in? Just for a night! Please!!!" I begged.

"No Bottle! I don't let anyone in ya know!" Pie now stared at me, with an annoyed expression.

"PLEASEEEEEEE" I begged again, this time with puppy eyes. I knew this always worked.

"Why do I always fall for this?" Pie laughed to herself. "Alright. This ONE time I'll let her come in."

"YAYYYYY!"

I grabbed Fanny by the hand and led her inside. Pie's house was the norm. I saw Pie glare at Fanny as she walked in. The two didn't get along at all. It was more on Pie's side since she hated anyone who was a "bitch" to her friends. She gave Fanny the middle finger before lighting another cigarette and going to her room.

"I'll be in my room working if you two need shit."

"Sorry, Fanny, she's pretty stubborn to others."

"Ugh. I understand. Everyone still hates me from high school."

"Look, just cause you messed up in high school, doesn't mean you can bounce back. If you behave here, then Pie will probably tolerate you a little more."

"I guess you're right."

We sat down in the living room and watched television for a couple of hours. That's when Pie came out of her room.

"Bottle, where will Fanny sleep?"

"Oh! She can sleep in the same room as me, the guest room!"

"Whatever. That works I guess."

It was 10 at night and Fanny and I both got ready.

"Jeez, it's been a while since someone's let me stay in their house," Fanny mumbled.

"But didn't Bubble-"

"SHUT UP. Do not talk about her." Fanny snapped at me randomly.

I stared at her, wide-eyed. She apologized shortly after, telling me how Bubble ditched her and since she was her only friend before, she didn't want anyone reminding her of her. I understood and we both got ready for bed. I finished first and went to sleep rather quickly, as I wanted to get good sleep tomorrow.

"I can sleep on the floor if ya like." Fanny pointed out.

"No no, that would be mean. You can sleep in the same bed as me."

"Oh, if you're fine with it, okay." Fanny had a soft smile. It was the first smile I saw today.

Fanny tucked herself under the covers. "It's been a while since I slept somewhere this nice."

"That's great. Goodnight, Fanny." I spoke, now super tired.

"Goodnight, Bottle. Thanks so much for helping me today."

"It's really no biggie."

We both drifted off to sleep. For the first time in a while, I didn't have traumatizing nightmares. I slept softly and soundly as I heard the summer winds tap the windows like a tired man. Today was a weird day.

-

If you made it to the end of this chapter, comment, "L". Anyway, thanks so much for reading this chapter. I made it slightly shorter since the next one will be very action-packed. I'm so sorry for posting this chapter a day late. I'll try not to do that again. Stay tuned until the next one haha! Have an amazing rest of your day/night :)

Chapter 23: Publishing 11/28/23

Chapter 23 - Pie

WARNING: EXCESSIVE SWEARING (cause it's Pie's chapter) AND DEPICTIONS OF VIOLENCE

The days were getting so bland. Nothing's been happening for me. My friends are talking about this "weird entity shit" that I don't understand. I woke up the next morning. I should really lay off on smoking in general. I woke up anyway and got ready. Pillow wanted to do some stupid "meet up" again for some reason. I was starting to hate some people in the friend group. Pen and Tree were both stupid as hell, Liy was annoying, and now we have Pillow forcing us to meet up for no reason. I really wasn't in the mood for shit like this since I was starting to feel a sensation of "gloominess". I talked to Bottle and she said it was depression. I pondered on why I had it in the first place. Nothing bad was happening, so why bother?

I heard Fanny leave the house after I woke up. I woke up late today, about 10 am. I saw Fanny walk out. Thank fuck. Fanny was such a bitch in high school. She always picked on my friends cause they were "losers". It's funny that she came to MY house after everything she's done. I genuinely don't know how Bottle was able to convince my dumbass to let her stay the night. I shrugged off my internal thoughts and started to change into my day clothes. I picked out some nicer-looking ones cause I felt like it.

"Pie?" Bottle asked from the door.

"Bottle? Good morning," I nonchalantly stated.

Bottle opened the door to see me changing into my clothes. My bra was resting on the bed as I was changing into my day clothes. I looked up and saw Bottle staring at me.

"Ahem. Knock before entering next time?" I asked, slightly embarrassed but mad at the same time.

"OH SHOOT! Sorry, Pie!" Bottle apologized before slamming the door.

I laughed to myself. Bottle was the most joyful, innocent friend I have ever had. She's always smiling about everything, despite having that shit of a father, and she acts like such a baby sometimes. I chuckled to myself and finished up.

I walked out of the room and saw Bottle smile at me.

"Hey Pie! I'm still sorry for doing that!" Bottle apologized and started laughing.

"Nah, it's alright. You've done that before," I pointed out, also laughing.

"Why are you always doom and gloom around everyone else but me, Pie?" Bottle asked.

"I think a better question would be why are you always so annoyingly cheerful?" I clapped back.

"Hey! I'm not annoying!" Bottle frowned and punched my shoulder lightly.

I chuckled at this and we proceeded to eat some breakfast. Bottle was a surprisingly good cook, and since my parents knew her so well and she'd been to my house so many times, she knew where everything was. Bottle cooked us up some omelets and I ate them super fast, as I was starving when I woke up.

"So, how'd you like my food hehe," Bottle asked.

"THAT SHIT WAS DOPE!" I yelled out.

"HAHA!! I'm glad you love it so much," Bottle smiled.

I checked my watch and noticed we were late for the meetup at Pillow's house. I told Bottle and we got our bikes from my garage. I kept Bottle's bike on me since my dad was a mechanic and he loved it when Bottle would ask him to fix her stuff. We left on our bikes and pedaled to Pillow's house.

We got to Pillow's house and saw everyone outside. Pillow was on the doorstep and everyone else was chatting with each other.

"Hi, Guys!!" Bottle excitedly greeted everyone.

"Hello, Bottle!" Liy smiled.

Bottle hugged everyone, being the joyous ball of sunshine she was. Meanwhile, I smugly smiled at all of them and waved hi. I didn't hug everyone, but I smiled and waved at them, which I thought was good enough.

"Is everyone here?" Pillow asked.

"Yup," Pen stated.

We walked inside Pillow's house. Her dad was at a business meeting today, so she was home alone.

Pillow led us up to her room. When we got there, we saw a projector lined up against her bedroom wall, a laptop with a document titled, "RESEARCH", double the amount of papers on the walls as yesterday, and even a larger, more detailed map of the city with crude drawings in red marker on it.

"So, you're probably wondering why I brought all of you here. It's becau-" Pillow was cut off by me.

"Shut up and start telling us your points already," I smiled.

"PIE! RUDE!" Bottle angrily nudged me.

"Pie's probably right. I should just get to the points." Pillow laughed.

"So, I did some research about this "entity" we were facing. I put some details into the search engines and found some startling news. Based on my research, we might be dealing with some supernatural being."

"Duh." Tree rolled his eyes.

"Anyway, I concluded that this thing must be a shapeshifter since

people who said they had an encounter with the being told different stories than what I had seen. One user said this so-called entity showed up to them as a giant spider, while another claimed the entity showed up to them as a snake."

"So, what's your point?" Remote asked.

"My point is that this thing is a shapeshifter. I also believe that this takes on our greatest fears and uses them against us. For example, Tree, did you see anything abnormal these past few days?"

"Uhhh, yes..." Tree grudgingly admitted

"What did you see?"

"Well, when I was attacked, the entity showed up to me as a clown."

"Okay. Bottle. What did the entity show up to you as?"

"When I saw it yesterday, it took the form of my dead brother in a dark basement."

"Okay, now it's confirmed that this thing shows up to everyone differently. Now, my final question. Tree, are clowns your greatest fear?"

"Yes, yes they are."

"Bottle?"

"I always thought my biggest fear was the dark, but the monster showed up to me as my dead brother. Maybe deep down, I'm scared of the loss of my brother."

"So my point stands. This monster takes the form of the thing you're most afraid of and uses the power of fear against you to overpower you." Pillow pointed out.

"I also found something else. I found the name, source, and behavior of this thing. According to the web, this entity is called, "The Fear Eater". The Fear Eater possesses supernatural abilities, such as shapeshifting, controlling the minds of people around you, causing

hallucinations, and interfering with sleep. It also says that this thing was once a man like us, but died to mental torture thousands of years ago. Now, it seeks vengeance on anyone in its path."

"This is crazy and all, but why would this thing choose us specifically to torment?" Liy asked.

"That's a good question. This man was buried in an abandoned gravesite in Goiky. It is said that if you interfere with the grave, you'll become cursed." Pillow added.

"Wait, you don't think-" Pen was cut off.

"Could it be that the grave we dug up after Teardrop's party was the said grave?" Remote asked.

"I think that we DID accidentally dig up the Fear Eater's grave. I have known this since there was an apt description of the grave and an image. The image looked exactly like the one we dug up."

"Holy shit..." Liy's jaw dropped.

"So basically Liy's stupid dare towards Pen caused all of us to get cursed?" Bottle asked.

"Pretty much. There is no common way to lift the curse, and everyone who has the curse has eventually disappeared. But fear not, I ran tests on myself to find some rules and boundaries that this entity has."

Pillow turned the projector on and showed us some rules.

The entity takes on different forms, depending on what the victim is most scared of

"I've already established this from the fact Tree was attacked by a clown, and that Bottle was lured into a darkened basement." Pillow advocated.

Only people cursed by the entity can see the damage the entity has done to the environment.

"We know this since Pen told us that Marker, Stapy, or Foldy couldn't see the entity's trails after it affected the bathroom, but we could see everything that happened."

We can physically interact with the entity.

"If we can physically interact with the entity, then that probably means we can hurt it."

The entity cannot affect people outside the boundaries of Goiky.

I tried this yesterday by going to the city next door. When I was there, I had no nightmares or visions of the entity." Pillow further demonstrated.

The entity can interact with the environment and control others.

"I ran a test and the entity was able to control my TV, radio, and even my cell phone. I know it has the power to influence others since when my dad went near the TV while it was controlled, he reported a woozy and sick feeling."

"Wow. How much research did you do about this?" Bottle asked with curiosity.

"About a couple days worth," Pillow said. "I want to end this thing once and for all so we don't have to live with it anymore."

Pillow then proceeded to flip to the next thing on the projector. It showed a map of the city with lots of scribbles around it.

"According to the map of Goiky, there have been lots of events in the past involving this supernatural being. All of these events took place in this area of the city," Pillow implied while pointing to the side of the city with the graveyard.

While listening to the presentation, I had no idea what Pillow was talking about, as I hadn't experienced this entity yet. I didn't know a single thing about this thing.

Pillow finished telling us everything, and everyone started telling each other again about what they saw the entity do.

"Liy, what did you see again?" Pillow asked.

"I didn't see anything, but I heard something. It felt so real, like my dad's voice."

"Very interesting..."

"Wait, Pillow, did you see anything?" Pen asked, intrigued.

"Oh, I definitely saw something. I got chased through the library by a tall, fancy-looking man. As I was running through the library, I heard memories of my dad's abuse from before."

"Goddamn," Pen commented.

I still had no clue what they were talking about.

"Wait, can only virgins see this stuff? Is that why I'm not seeing this shit?" I asked.

"Shut up, Pie," Liy rolled her eyes.

"It's a valid question."

We kept talking until we all got our bikes from outside. We decided to hang out for the rest of the day by causally strolling on our bikes. I lit another cigarette and started riding.

"Pie, you should really stop smoking," Remote commented.

Not feeling it, I replied, "Nah, I do what I want, when I want."

Remote rolled her eyes and shrugged it off.

That's when I heard the sounds of someone screaming.

"You guys hear that? Or is that just me," I asked the group.

"The kid screaming? I hear that too," Tree commented.

"We should go check it out, I sense someone's in danger," Liy replied.

"Who invited Sherlock here?" I asked.

"Shut up, that's not even that funny." Liy groaned.

We got off our bikes and followed the sounds of the screaming. We came to the edge of what looked like a fence. I peered over the fence and saw a river at the bottom. I saw a group of boys picking on some kid.

"Down there," I motioned for the others to follow me.

We ran down the hill leading to the river and saw a group of boys picking on another boy. I took a closer look and recognized the kid. It was... Lightning? There was a bigger boy on top of him with a rock in his hand. He overpowered the smaller boy and was about to smash his skull in with a rock. My fighting instinct kicked in. I picked up a rock nearby and chucked it at the kid, hoping to hit him. The rock flew through the air and eventually hit him in the forehead. He got thrown back from the impact and fell over Lightning. Lightning took the chance to sprint away across another stretch of land towards us. The older kid's gang looked up at me in disgust as one of the members was still on the ground, holding his head.

Lightning hid behind all of us. He had scratches on his arms and legs. I stared the gang down and the lead boy started to laugh. Remote, being scared of the gang already, hid behind Tree.

"You guys are trying too hard." The boy exclaimed. His gold hair swaying in the wind. He pointed to Remote and started to chuckle even harder.

"Don't worry, he'll do you. You just gotta ask nicely," He pointed to Remote and Tree at the same time.

"Shut the fuck up." Remote rolled her eyes.

"I see you've got the bandages. Why not show everyone who you belong to?"

Remote clutched her fist, as he was referring to the cuts he gave her that day.

That's when Liy turned red with rage, as she now knew who gave Remote the wounds.

"C'mon, guys, let's give these guys a fucking lesson."

"Liy! These guys are so much bigger than us. They'll destroy us," Bottle nervously walked over.

"I don't care. I'm teaching them something one way or another."

We walked over to the other side of the river where the gang was.

"Come at me, the fuck you gonna do?" The golden-haired boy asked.

Liy walked up to him and tried to punch him, but he blocked her and kicked her right in the stomach. She winced in pain but took a second swing, which clocked him right in the chin. That's when all hell broke loose.

"Boys, kill them!" The kid said, now holding his cheek.

Two other boys were accompanying him. One was taller and had greyish-silver hair, while the other was shorter, but black and white. They took out their pocket knives and walked towards us. This is when we started to back up, as they had weapons. Although we outnumbered them, they had weapons.

"Yeah, that's right! Back the fuck up!" The silver-haired boy smirked.

I glanced over and saw Pen pick up a rock. He chucked it at the taller kid and hit him in the skull. He dropped his knife, which made it fall into the river. He tried to get it again, but I stepped in and kicked him in the stomach. He fell to the ground and crawled away.

"Knife!" The golden-haired boy watched.

Both boys started to step back now.

"Let's get the fuck outta here!" The black and white boy frantically said. He helped his friend up and they ran away, leaving the golden-haired kid on the floor by himself.

Liy walked up to the kid and stared at him.

"Next time, don't pick on my girlfriend."

She kicked him while he was on the ground, causing his nose to bleed profusely. He lay on the ground in pain, while we all walked away and decided to leave him alone. As we were walking away, Remote stopped to take another look.

"Stay out of town, asshole!" Remote glared at him while flipping him off.

We walked out of the area with Lightning following behind us.

"Thank you guys for saving me, but you guys shouldn't have done that. Now, they'll be after you too." Lightning said while walking.

"But you were about to die," I remarked.

"Yeah, Trophy and his gang are always after everyone they see."

"We've gotta make a name for our friend group," Remote told us.

"Well, we just prevented someone from dying. That should give us some ideas." Bottle remarked.

"True. I feel like I'm getting deja vu. Is that just me?" Tree asked.

"Well, we did have this wacky club back in high school called Death Pact or some shit," Pen smiled.

"So that means we're just called Death Pact? Sounds lame as hell." Liy shrugged.

"Yeah, but the name still indicates what we do. We're all about preventing death and creating trust!" Bottle smiled.

"Well, Lighting, in that case, welcome to Death Pact!" Remote exclaimed.

We hopped back on our bikes and decided to stop by a nearby park.

"C'mon, Lightning, get on the back of my bike. I've got another seat." Pen smiled.

"Gee, thanks!" Lightning gratefully exclaimed.

We pedaled our way to the park to chat for a bit to get our minds off of things.

It didn't take long for us to arrive at the park. We hopped off our bikes and found a bench next to the entrance. We sat down and decided to chat. We all wanted to get to know Lightning, as none of us were that close to him.

"Lightning... you've got a major scratch on the side of your arm. You okay?" Pillow asked.

"Yeah, I'm fine. Trophy's gang likes targeting me the most, so I'm rather used to it." Lightning sadly frowned.

"Why?" Liy asked.

Lightning sighed. "I'm his next-door neighbor. He bullied me ever since I moved to Goiky. He killed my dog and almost burnt down our house recently."

"Jesus. I thought people at our high school were psycho," I commented.

"It's okay though. I'm here today."

Pillow joked. "Did you see anything weird lately?" She laughed, trying to lighten the mood.

"That's funny you said that. I've been seeing very weird things lately." Lightning perked up.

Pillow raised a brow. She had an idea of what Lightning was seeing. "What are you afraid of?"

-

Hello everyone! This chapter was so fun to write compared to some of my other chapters haha. I hope you enjoyed this one! If you read to the end, type "LTrophy" so I know who made it to the end lol. Anyways, thanks for reading! Have an amazing day/night! :)

Chapter 24: Publishing 11/30/23

Chapter 24 - Remote

WARNING: MENTIONS OF VIOLENCE AND DEATH, ALONG WITH CHARACTERS MAKING OUT (TONGUE KISSING)

Lighting responded with a frown, "I don't really wanna talk about it right now."

Pie interrupted, "So let me get this straight. This thing takes the form of your worst fear and mimics it?"

"It kinda sounds like a bad dream in real life," Liy mentioned.

"Well, my grandfather thinks that this town is cursed," Lightning told Pillow. "He believes that there is something, one thing, lurking underneath the town, terrorizing the people of Goiky from time to time."

"But it can't be one thing if we all say something different," Liy answered back.

"There is one thing. We established that this thing shapeshifts into something that scares us all most." Pillow reasoned.

"I-I saw a clown..." Tree hesitated. "It was like something straight out of hell."

"Because it isn't real." Pie rolled her eyes. "None of this is real. The clown you saw, the voices Liy heard, the thing that chased Pillow, none of this is real. It's all in our imaginations."

"I don't think so. I know the difference between a bad dream and something in real life," Lightning stated.

"What did you see? Did you see something like the rest of us?" Pillow asked.

Lightning nodded. "Yes. You know the abandoned house that's like big and blue on Dream Street?"

Knowing that the house was easily recognizable, we all nodded and kept listening.

"I was inside when a deranged gunman came inside the house and threatened to kill us. My sister and I were the only ones home at the time. She tried to stop the man from hurting us or taking anything, so the man shot her. I was able to escape the house in time, but I could hear my sister screaming from inside as the man laughed as my sister pleaded my name from outside. I heard one last gunshot before she died. I could hear her screaming bloody murder and pounding on the door before she died. Recently, I've been hearing the sounds of gunshots and seeing the figure of the same man who killed my sister in my peripheral vision." Lightning explained.

"It's alright though. Everyone's afraid of something."

"You've got that right." Pie turned around to see kids shooting each other with toy guns.

"Pie, what are you scared of?" Liy asked.

I nudged Liy.

"War..." Pie stared off into the distance, shaking. "I grew up around lots of Mexican wars..."

We decided to end the conversation, as the things we were talking about were getting too serious.

"Guys, I have something else to show you at my house," Pillow looked at her phone.

We got on our bikes and rode home. My bike's wheel was busted, so I was a bit slower, but Liy stayed behind.

It wasn't long until we all made it to Pillow's house. Pillow opened her garage and showed a giant map inside a secret room in her house. This map was more detailed and marked all of the tragic events that happened in Goiky's history. Lightning looked at the map

with interest. There was nothing in the room besides some posters on the wall of many events. There were mugshots, news articles, anything you could think of. Pillow closed the garage door behind us, as she set up.

"I researched every tragic event that happened in Goiky. All of these events happened in very certain places. The bar fire happened here," Pillow exclaimed, pointing to a place on the map with a stick. "The shooting happened here, and the nuclear bomb explosion happened here."

There was a pattern. Every location was on a street that connected to the abandoned graveyard we visited. It was almost uncanny, as the locations on the map circled the graveyard.

"The graveyard was where we dug up the grave and went that night. There seems to be tons of evidence stacking up against this place. The graveyard must be the origin." Pillow demonstrated.

"Great fucking job, Liy. Bringing a supernatural entity into our lives." Pie angrily stated.

"I know what I did. That's why we're going to try to solve this once and for all."

I felt uneasy at the sight of the map. I felt like there was something... off... in the room. I got up to go outside for a bit when I heard a sound from behind the group.

CRASH

We looked behind us in shock to see that one of Pillow's framed posters fell to the ground. The glass frame cracked and there were shards of glass everywhere. Pillow walked over to the picture frame to mount it back on the wall. That's when she froze in fear. When she put the picture back up, the person on the cover of the poster was gone. I remembered that this poster had a mugshot of the man who shot up the area next to the graveyard.

We all froze in shock. I wanted to leave, but I also didn't want to leave my friends behind. I heard a noise behind me, a noise so faint,

but recognizable. The tap of the singular footstep alerted me. Everyone looked behind to see the man from the mugshot standing only a couple of feet away from us. It transformed into the tall man I saw in the sewer. The man bared his teeth at us and started walking towards us with a bloody smile. We all ran to the garage door to open it, but the door wouldn't open. The tall man laughed maniacally and stretched his hand out many feet to try to grab one of us. It was mere inches away from grabbing Pen, but Pillow hit the emergency switch, causing the garage door to swing open.

Upon opening, we all ran out of the garage screaming. Only after a couple of seconds, we looked back inside the garage to see if the monster was still there. There was nothing. Absolutely nothing. All there was was a map on the ground and some cracked glass on the floor.

We were all breathing heavily from the horrifying experience. Liy hugged me, as I was trembling with fear. The thing was so scary, that even Pie seemed frightened. Bottle cried as Pie tried to comfort her. The boys stared inside the garage in shock at what they had just witnessed.

"It saw us. It fucking saw us. It knows where we live and where we all are," Tree shook.

"That's it," Liy walked towards the garage door and went out to get her bike.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"I'm going to plan. Tomorrow, we head to the abandoned graveyard. We NEED to take this thing down. I can't deal with this thing terrorizing all of us."

"But it's summer," Pen mentioned. "We should be outside, having fun, celebrating being done with school."

"Pen, I don't wanna hear your bullshit right now," Liy shouted.

Liy got on her bike and proceeded to ride off and go back to her apartment.

"Liy, wait!" I exclaimed.

Liy ignored me. She kept riding her bike at a fast speed back in the direction of her house. I looked at everyone else.

"So, now what do we do?" I asked.

"Are we going to let her face the entity alone tomorrow?" Tree asked.

"No, we should just go home and get some rest." Bottle said.

"Agreed."

All of us decided to part ways for the day. Pen offered to ride Lightning back to his house. I decided to follow Liy home, as she seemed like she wasn't okay. I secretly trailed her on my bike. She pulled out some earphones and started listening to some songs, so she couldn't hear the squeaks of my bike as I rode behind her.

I made it to Liy's apartment shortly after she got there. I rode the elevator to her apartment number. Once I got to her apartment, I put my ear up to the door. I could hear her talking to herself, mumbling incoherently. I gently tapped on the door to get her attention. No response. I tried again, this time louder.

"One moment." Her voice sounded tired and almost raspy.

Liy opened the door. I saw tears in her eyes and her hands had blood on them.

"Hey, I just wanted to check to see if you're okay." I calmly smiled.

"Remote, leave me alone." Liy continued sobbing while looking at me.

"Are you sure you're okay?" I asked, this time more solemn.

"Okay, fine, come on in," Liy said, slightly louder.

I walked inside her apartment. Right when I stepped foot inside the house, I understood why her hands were bloody. There were dents and bloody marks all over her walls. It had been apparent that she was punching her walls. I looked back at her. She scratched the back

of her head and softly smiled.

"Liy, there's something not right. Would you like to talk about it?"

Liy sat down on one end of her bed and began talking to me.

"I'm ashamed."

"Of what?"

"The fact I brought this all on everyone. I gave Pen the idea to dig up the grave. I was the one who told him it was a good idea. I was the one who initiated Truth or Dare. It's all my fault." Liy spilled.

"No, it's not," I stated, deadpan.

"Oh really, Remote? How the fuck is it not my fault? I did everything leading up to this point!" Liy snapped.

"Because, how would you know that something would happen? You didn't mean to. If you knew that something would happen, you would've never done anything." I reasoned.

"That doesn't change the fact that I made all of this happen."

"Although we have a crisis on our hands, that doesn't mean we can't fix it," I held her hand. "Whatever it takes to stop this curse, I'll always be there for you."

"You really mean it?"

"You already know I do," I smiled.

"Thanks, Remote. I don't know what I would do without you."

Liy gave me a big hug and tackled me onto her bed. I hugged her back, smiling.

"So, what should we do now?" Liy laughed.

"I don't know. We should go out to clear our minds. Ya know, take a walk," I suggested.

"That sounds perfect."

We left the apartment and decided to go on a walk. Since we lived on the less busy side of Goiky, the suburbs were nice. The sky was a shade of appealing cerulean, the wind blew on the trees as we walked by, and we could hear the sounds of the leaves fluttering and the birds chirping. This felt nice... too nice... Usually, I would have suspicions about this, but I was too happy to care. Liy and I held hands as we walked down the road. We saw Gaty and Saw walking along the sidewalk too. I waved to them, and they waved back. Saw laughed as Gaty waved with one of her legs. It was amusing to her. Gaty kicked Saw playfully and the two kept walking.

"This is so nice. I've never felt this calm in a while," Liy calmly breathed.

"Agreed, we should do this more often."

We continued walking around the neighborhood for a while before Liy tapped my shoulder.

"Hey, Remote?"

"Yeah? What's up?"

"I'm sorry, but I've been wanting to do this for a while."

I was suddenly pulled into Liy. She pulled me into her and kissed me on the lips. I was caught off–guard by this, but I complied and continued kissing her. We locked lips for about thirty seconds. She was a good kisser. Her lips were perfectly moist, and she tasted so sweet. I started to blush and Liy pulled away.

"Remote, I'm so sorry if you were uncomfortable. I just did what I had been wanting to do for the past month." Liy frantically apologized. She started to sweat as I kept staring at her.

I licked my lips. "That felt really good. Thanks for showing me how you felt," I softly smiled.

"You really mean it?" Liy asked with a chuckle.

"Yeah! I always wanted to know what a kiss with my girlfriend would feel like!"

"Remote, you're so sweet."

We smiled and blushed at each other and continued to walk. Instead of being silent the whole time, we both talked about anything we could think of, making each other laugh. I still didn't get why Pie had something against Liy. Liy was one of the sweetest people in the world once you got to know her. "Yeah, Pie's opinion doesn't matter now," I thought to myself.

We made it back to the apartment and we were greeted by Firey.

"Hey, Liy! Hey Remote!" Firey smiled.

"Hello, Firey!" Liy smiled.

"What were you two up to?" He asked.

"Oh, just a friendly walk," I interrupted.

"That's cool. See ya guys around!" Firey smiled as he walked off.

We both walked up the stairs to the apartment. Liy was still blushing from the kiss. We opened the door. We sat down on the bed together and decided to play some video games together. Liy set up her console and we connected our controllers.

"No, Remote, I'm player one."

"Nuh-uh. I'm player one idiot. I connected my controller first."

"Give that back!" Liy laughed.

Liy wrestled me for the controller as I kept it away from her. She eventually pinned me to the bed and took the controller out of my hands, despite my efforts.

"I'll be taking that, thank you," Liy laughed.

"No fair!"

We hopped on Liy's favorite game, Mario Kart. We ended up playing many rounds together. I kept getting mad that Liy kept throwing red shells at me. She would purposefully stay behind my kart to collect items and use them on me so I couldn't do well no matter what.

"Stop! You're so mean."

"Make me."

We played until the end. I still ended up beating Liy.

"Good game, Liy," I taunted her.

"Can you do me a quick favor?" I asked.

"Yeah?"

"Hold this L for me HAHAHAHA!" I made my hand in the shape of an "L" and put it in front of her.

"Shut up! You got so lucky."

(Timeskip until 7:00 at night)

Liy and I were watching some TV. We decided to go to bed early tonight since we planned to face the entity tomorrow. Surprisingly, our friends offered to help, despite being terrified of the creature. I stared at Liy watching TV. I couldn't get the thought of kissing her out of my head. I wanted to do it again. I stared at her, but she suddenly turned to look at me. I tried to play it off, but she already knew.

"Remote, I think I know what you want."

"What?" I smirked.

Liy pulled me into another kiss. We both lay on the bed while kissing each other. Her lips felt even better this time. I closed my eyes and embraced the kiss with her. I felt my cheeks heat once again and I started to sweat. Liy's tongue requested entrance to my mouth. I gladly let her enter, as she felt around my mouth, exploring every crevice available. I decided to do the same for her. After a long make-

out session, we stopped and heavily breathed on the bed.

"Oh my goodness, Liy, I didn't know you were such a good kisser," I complimented.

"Same goes for you, love!" Liy smiled.

"I love you so much, Liy."

"I love you too, cutie."

We decided to call it a night and we both were about to fall asleep. That's when we heard a creak come from the door. I glanced up to see Gelatin's phone, recording us.

"OH SHITTT! THIS IS GOING ON THE GRAM! NO WAY I CAUGHT A MAKE-OUT SESSION ON TAPE!"

"SHUT UP AND GET OUT OF HERE NOW BEFORE I CALL SECURITY!" I yelled.

Gelatin ran out of the room, shutting the door behind him. I heard his footsteps running down the hall, getting quieter as he ran away. I looked back and smiled at Liy. She really did love me, huh?

-

Heyy everyone! This chapter was much harder for me to write, as I have never written about two characters making out LOL. Anyway, thanks for reading this chapter. The next chapter's going to be a thriller, so stay tuned haha. Have an amazing rest of your day/night! :DDDDD

Chapter 25: Publishing 12/02/23

Chapter 25 - Tree

WARNING: DEPICTIONS OF VIOLENCE

Private DMs:

Black Hole: Gm

Tree: GM Black Hole!

Black Hole: How ya been?

Tree: Not the best, the thing that's been terrorizing us that I've been telling you about keeps coming back.

Black Hole: Man, if I were on Earth at the moment, I would destroy that thing hahaha

Tree: Agreed lol.

Tree: Anyways, I'm going to get ready now. Take care, love! <3

Black Hole: You too dude! <33

I smiled and laid my phone down on my bed. Black Hole made me feel a certain way, like a warm, fuzzy one. I proceeded to think about him while I changed. Today, Liy told everyone to meet at the abandoned gravesite at noon. I was pissed at Liy. She made my best friend dig up a grave that put us in harm's way. I scowled at the thought and continued with my routine.

I finished getting ready and walked down the steps to see Pen drawing.

"Pen, what's that?" I asked.

"Nothing," He answered with a straight face.

I then snatched the paper off the desk and looked at it.

"Hey!"

I eyed the piece of paper. Pen was sketching his long-time crush, Pencil. He drew a self-portrait of her sitting on a cliffside while staring at the setting sun. Pen wasn't much of an artist, but this piece looked excellent in my opinion. I handed the drawing back to him and laughed.

"Why do you like Pencil? She's kind of a jerk," I reasoned.

"Nah, once you get to know her, she's pretty nice," Pen reassured.

"Makes sense."

I walked by, ignoring the drawing. I decided to make myself a breakfast sandwich for breakfast. I finished making the sandwiches. Being the good friend I was, I made Pen one too. Since he was trying to "buff up", I put lots of healthy things inside of his.

"Breakfast is served."

"Goddamn, Tree! These look sick!"

We both ate on the couch together and gossiped about some friends from school.

"Tree, tell me why Pillow built like a rejected video game character?"

I laughed for a while about Pen's statement. "I have no clue, but why she look like the type to climb a glass wall to see what's on the other side?"

"OH SHIT AHAHAHA."

We proceeded to make fun of our friends, mainly Pillow and Liy, as there were many things we could say about them. We kept talking until Pen's phone buzzed. He got a text from the group chat.

"Ughh..."

"What is it?" I asked.

"Stupid Liy wants us to meet now..." Pen tiredly groaned.

"Ugh. Tell her we'll be there soon."

We both hopped in my new car and drove off to the gravesite where she wanted us to meet.

We arrived to see all of our friends talking with Liy. Pie waved to us and motioned for us to come over. We came over and overheard the friends discussing things on how to take the entity down. Surprisingly, Lightning showed up too. Huh, it looks like Lightning really is part of our friend group now.

"Okay, we'll place security cameras around the property and see if we can catch anything," Liy exclaimed, holding a couple of cameras she brought from home.

"Great idea!" Remote wrapped an arm around Liy. Although she tried to hide the fact that she and Liy were dating, it was clear that the two were, as they always held hands when they walked and put their arms around each other while we were talking to each other.

Liy gave Pen and me a couple of cameras to place around the property. Lightning decided to bring his pocket knife, which he claims he uses for self-defense against Trophy and his gang. The three of us walked around the graveyard. Pen and I set up the cameras. As we walked, I caught a glimpse of the grave that Pen dug up before. We cautiously walked over to the grave and eyed the contents. The casket was left the exact same way it was the day it was dug up, but there lay a note on top of the case.

Dear Person,

Don't bother re-burying this grave. The damage has already been done. After I saw a group of about six or seven people come over and dig my grave up, I erupted into a flurry of rage. It will be my mission to cause these people as much pain as possible before killing them. It wasn't hard to deduce what each member was afraid of. I can use these to make them go insane much faster. Lucky me.

June

As I've been tormenting these people for the sake of vengeance, I happened to notice that as I used my powers, they've managed to get stronger. Now, I can control the environment around me. Now, I can affect anyone I want. It's so much fun causing people to go crazy. I like the sight of people losing their minds. What they did to me will never be forgiven. I assume you're not the people who initially dug up my grave, but just know, that I'm coming for you. DIE DIE DIE DIE DIE DIE DIE DIE DIE

After I read the note, I shuddered with fear. We caused this to happen. We're the reason why this town is collapsing and people are going insane because of us.

"So it was you guys who caused this to happen?" Lightning asked.

"Yeah, Liy gave Pen the idea to dig up the grave. We never knew that something as terrible as this would happen."

"Normally, I would try to kill you guys, but I understand. I would've never known this would happen myself."

"Thanks, Lightning."

We continued by the grave and kept placing cameras around the property. We didn't want to go inside the building because we were scared, but Pie went inside herself to place the cameras since no one else was doing it.

"Pie! Why are you going inside the creepy building?" I asked.

Pie removed her cigarette from her mouth and put it out against a wall. "This shit ain't scary. I'm just doing it 'cause everyone else is too chicken to do it."

"Oh... Okay! Thank you, Pie," I chuckled.

"Don't mention it, Tree boy."

Pen placed the last camera we were given on top of the grave itself to see if we could catch anything happening around the grave. Lightning clapped, saying we did a good job. We walked back to our

car and saw Liy with a drone controller.

"Liy, why do you have a drone controller?" I asked.

"I can fly this thing inside the building to see if anything's up. For now, I'm practicing."

"Ah, makes sense."

"I'm gonna take this thing down and catch it red-handed if it's the last thing I do," Liy asserted.

"You tell 'em, honey!" Remote called from a distance.

"Liymote!" Pie teased from the building.

"Shut up, Pie!" Remote chuckled with a slight frown.

"Looks like I touched a nerve. Me thinks the Remote is super protective of her mate!"

Remote rolled her eyes and kept walking. We waited by the car for Pillow, Pie, and Bottle to get back from placing their cameras and taking pictures of things. Pillow brought her giant camera, which was highly unnecessary, as the things we were doing didn't require much tech.

The three eventually made it back to the group. Liy thanked us for coming out to help, as she knew that we didn't want to come to a graveyard in the morning to do something like this. Although Liy was a bit bossy and assertive in my opinion, she had a good heart and I could tell she liked us all as friends. The fact Remote was suddenly always hanging on her made her seem happier. We all left and said our goodbyes. That's when Lightning walked up to Pen and me and had an unordinary request.

"Can you guys help me do a trick?" Lightning asked while on his skateboard.

"Sure dude. What do ya need help with?" Pen asked.

"I'll hold onto the rear of your car. You guys will drive about 20 miles

per hour. Once we get to that tree over there, I'll let go. From there, you can see what will eventually happen."

Since Pen and I had nothing else to do, we agreed. Pen got out of the car to record, while I drove the car.

"You guys ready?" Lightning called.

"Yup! Start the show dude!" Pen smiled.

I drove the car down the street while Pen followed. Pen was an extremely fast runner, so he caught up to Lightning with ease. I slammed on the gas and Lightning let go of the car, going at least 20 miles per hour on his skateboard. He skated over to a small ramp next to the curb and rolled straight into it. Lightning jumped at least ten feet into the air and over a tree. He landed on the sidewalk ceremoniously and got off his board.

"Woo!" Lightning cheered.

"Dude! That was sick!" I heard Pen call out to Lightning. I was impressed by Lightning's skating ability.

"Hey, wanna stop by our house? I got this new game for my console," I asked.

"Of course!" But I can only hang out for so long. My parents get worried when I'm out of the house.

We drove Lightning over to our house. He was happy to be away from his house, as according to him, his parents made him do chores and stuff. I chuckled at this. We eventually made it back home in sub-ten minutes.

We got inside the house, and Lightning seemed to like our interior.

"Wow! You guys got a nice house!" Lightning smiled.

"Yeah, it's okay I guess," I spoke, deadpan.

"Want anything to drink man?" Pen asked.

"Sure, water will be fine haha," Lightning laughed.

Lightning and I sat on the couch and I booted up the console. We decided to play some Mario Kart and placed some bets. Lightning proposed that the loser would have someone go through their text messages. Pen instantly agreed, but I was hesitant, as I didn't want Pen or Lightning to see that I was with Black Hole. I was thinking of telling Pen at a later date, but I wasn't ready as of now.

We started up the game and Pen took the lead immediately, with Lightning and I not too far behind.

"Ugh! Why do I keep getting blue-shelled!" Pen complained.

"Skill issue idiot," Lightning laughed.

"I wouldn't talk if I was in seventh."

We continued the race. It was the last lap, and I was in fourth, Lightning was in fifth, and Pen was in first. Lightning got a red shell from his next box and proceeded to use it on me.

"Take that!"

"Hey! I thought we would team up on Pen!"

"Boo Hoo, you might as well open your phone now."

The race ended with Lightning beating me by half a second. Pen took the lead, and I got last. I was mad at myself for losing, as I didn't want Pen to find out like this.

"Let's see those messages, buddy!" Pen ruffled my hair.

"Shut up and just take it."

Pen eyed my phone and looked for the first place to look.

"Hmm, let's check your DMs with Black Hole, as he's at the top."

I was screaming at myself in my head. "Tree! How could you do this? Now Pen's not gonna like you!" "You screwed up man!" I put my head

down slightly and saw Lightning take a glance too. I watched them read through the messages and Pen went wide-eyed when he saw some of the messages I'd been sending.

"Tree! You didn't tell me you were with Black Hole!" Lightning cackled.

"Yeah, man! How come you didn't tell us!" Pen smiled. Surprisingly, Pen wasn't mad like I thought he'd be.

"Wait... so you're not mad?" I asked.

"Why would we be mad? We're proud of you for getting a mate dude!" Pen and Lightning both smiled at me.

I laughed along with them and we shared a laugh for a brief moment.

"Hey, there's this new ice cream place not too far from here, wanna go?" Lightning offered.

"Sounds fun, but do we have time?" I asked.

"Tree, stop being a buzzkil, let's go," Pen smiled. I rolled my eyes at Pen.

"You've always gotta disagree with something, don't you."

"I don't disagree with you for no reason. It's that you're just a fool."

I punched him in the arm and we walked out the door to go in my new car that Black Hole gifted me not too long ago. Lightning fell asleep in the back, despite us only driving for a couple of minutes. I decided to lurch the car to wake him up. I slammed on the gas pedal and accelerated very fast. I then proceeded to slam the brake, making everyone in the car get thrown forward. Since Lightning was the smallest one, he got thrown the farthest.

"Ow! What was that for!" Lightning frowned.

"No sleeping on the job little man," I laughed.

"Hey! Just because I'm a few inches shorter than you guys doesn't

mean you can call me little!" Lightning exhaled.

"We can do whatever we want, LITTLE MAN!" Pen laughed.

"Posers."

We started to laugh after that and we eventually arrived at the ice cream shop. This one was special since it had a drive-thru alongside the restaurant itself. Everyone told Pen their order and we ordered at the next window.

"Hey, can I get one double-scoop mint chocolate chip, one single-scoop vanilla, and one triple-scoop cotton candy, bubblegum, and pistachio?" Pen asked. "Is that what you guys wanted?"

"Yup!" Lightning laughed from the back. Of course, he would be the one to order a triple-scoop.

We pulled up to the next window and paid. Surprisingly, Woody was working here for a summer job.

"That'll be 16.99!" Woody smiled.

"Yoo, thanks, Woods!" Pen gave him a high-five and handed him his credit card.

"Anytime!"

We went to the next window to pick up our stuff. Woody requested he give these to us since he knew us rather well.

"Thank you very much! Have a good day!"

"You too homie!"

We ate our ice cream in the car and decided to go back to my place. Lightning told us he had to go home, so we requested to drop him off at his place.

"Can you drop me a block away? I don't want my parents to know that I went out with friends. They can be strict."

"Sure dude."

We pulled up about a block away and rolled Lightning out. He thanked us for the drive and started walking back home. We waved to him as we drove off. Lightning was a good kid.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: LIGHTNING

Man, it was fun hanging out with Pen and Tree. Why did I not befriend them at school sooner? Life was always the same old same old, but today, I felt like I had fun this summer for once. I happily walked back to my house. The only complication was that Trophy and his gang usually hung out a ton at his house. If they spotted me, they would do unspeakable things to me. They had already killed my dog and set my house ablaze a couple of times. They also tried to kill me and stab me to death a couple of times. I wasn't too worried. Is that weird?

I made it to my house, but I saw no one other than Trophy and his gang hanging out outside my house. They were doing their usual things, throwing things at the side of my house for their amusement. I tried to step away, but that's when Knife noticed me.

"Trophy!" Knife yelled, alerting Trophy.

"Oh oh oh, look who we have here!" Trophy smiled a devilish smile.

The three boys started to walk over to me.

"Um, guys, shouldn't we give Lightning a break? It's getting boring picking on the same people," Yin-Yang suggested.

"Shut the fuck up, Yin-Yang," Trophy snapped.

The three started chasing after me as I ran the other way. I kept running until I went down the street for a couple of meters. I kept running, but I eventually tripped on a crack in the sidewalk.

'HAHA! Clumsy fuck!" Knife laughed.

Knife stepped on my ankle, pinning me to the ground. Trophy

climbed on top of me, pinning my limbs with his hands.

"Wallet," Trophy requested.

"What? I don't have a wa-"

I was cut off by Trophy deploying his knife. He rubbed the blade on my cheek and taunted me.

"Now, Lightning, I wouldn't lie to me if I were you," Trophy smiled.

I sighed. "Take it. It's in my left pocket."

"Yin-Yang!" Get this guy's wallet will ya?" Trophy asked.

Yin-Yang bent down. He had a sad expression and looked at me sympathetically. He slowly slipped the wallet out of my pocket and gave it to Trophy.

"Thanks, we'll leave ya be for now," Trophy smiled.

Trophy licked his hand and wiped it on my face before leaving. Knife spat on me as he left. I sat on the sidewalk, contemplating what I would do next. I had to face these guys so often, I kinda got used to it. I felt my cheek and noticed a drop of blood running down my cheek. It was only a small cut. When Trophy dragged the knife across my face, I figured that he accidentally poked my cheek, which started to slightly bleed. Luckily it was nothing serious. I shrugged it off and walked home.

I opened the door to see an empty house. My parents were still on vacation, and I had to live by myself for a bit. Great, how could a 17-year-old like me take care of a house by myself? I sat on the couch and got on my phone. Liy invited me to the group chat with all the friends in it. I joined and started to type when I heard Trophy throwing rocks at my window. I got up and looked out to confront him.

"Trophy! Fuck off will you?' I rolled my eyes angrily.

"It's funny how you act so tough when I can't beat you up," Trophy smiled with another stone.

I flipped him off before returning inside the house. I now had a reliable friend group I could trust. I checked my messages. I got a recent message from Liy. I waved her back and proceeded to text all day, forgetting about Trophy and his gang.

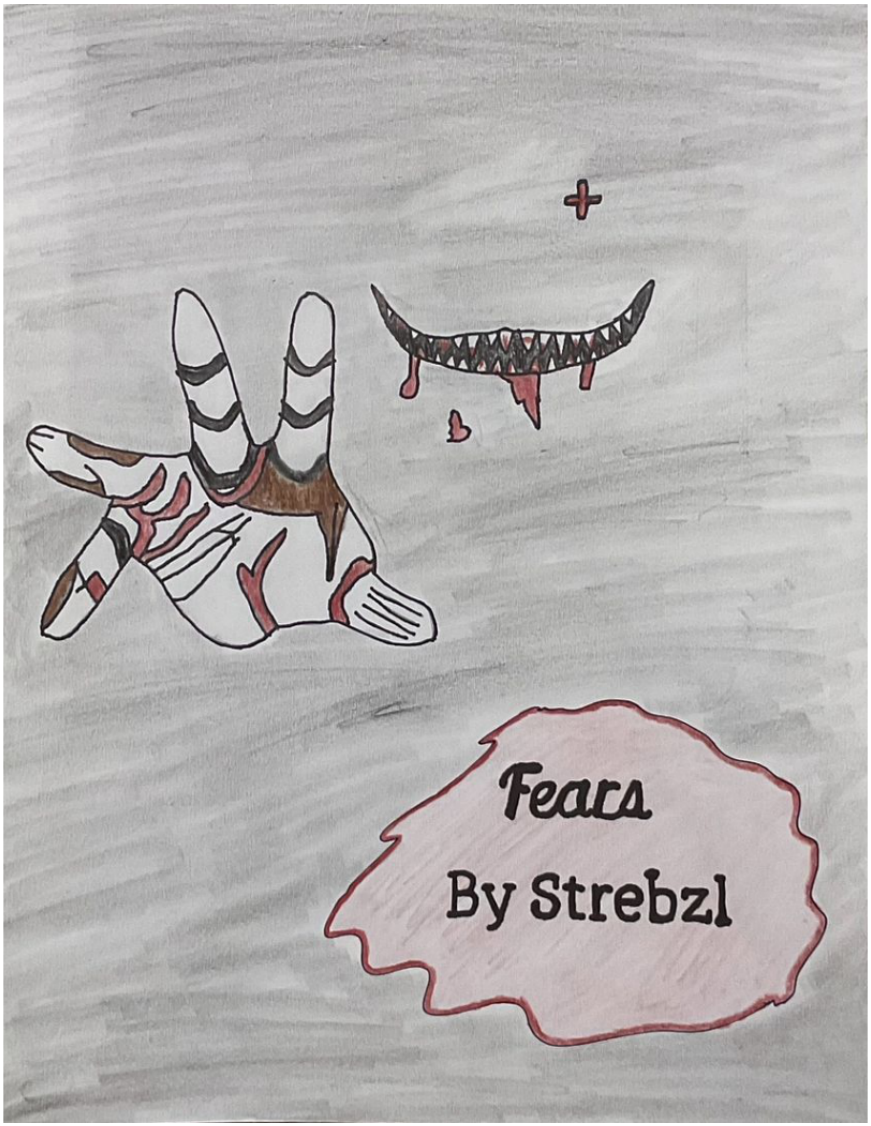
-

Woo! Lightning development, am I right? Thank you guys again for reading. I've got so many ideas for my story, but remember, you guys can request what happens in the story too! Since I'm writing this at about two in the morning, please inform me of my spelling mistakes haha. Once again, thank you, and have a damn great day/night! :D

Chapter 26: Publishing 12/04/23

ANNOUNCEMENT 2

Hello guys, I decided to redesign the cover, as it was rather boring haha.



Since I'm broke and don't know how to draw digitally, I decided to hand-draw a cover. Fyi, I know it's pretty terrible, but it's the best I could do hahaha.

Ty for reading!

-Strebzl :)

Chapter 26 - Bottle

WARNING: SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SUICIDE. DO NOT READ THIS IF YOU'RE SENSITIVE. TAKE THIS AS A SERIOUS WARNING. DO NOT READ IF YOU'RE SENSITIVE. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

This chapter takes place on the same day as the previous chapter...

I eventually got home after driving for what felt like eons. Pie let me stay at her house, but I wanted to be alone for a bit. All of these things happening at once were making me exhausted. I opened the door with caution, as I figured my dad would be super pissed if he remembered that I knocked him out. "Bottle, you're so dumb. Why would you go back to this place?" I asked myself. Nonetheless, I cranked the knob and peered inside the house. My dad was asleep on the couch. I snuck my way upstairs and looked inside the bathroom. There was no more blood on the ground. I figured my dad woke up and cleaned it. I went to my room and locked the door behind me.

"Bottley! You in there?" My dad asked while knocking on the door.

I decided not to respond. Instead, I took my phone out and started browsing my texts.

"I just wanna talk," My dad said, this time, louder.

Once again, I didn't respond, as I didn't want to alert my dad that I was in there. I bet if he got his hands on me, he would try to seriously injure me on purpose. I've gotten used to that happening after living in the house for the past 17 years of my life.

"Bottle, open the fucking door, or else I'm going to kick it down."

My dumb self got up and opened the door. I saw my dad smiling at me as I opened it.

"Hey, Bottley! How are you, sweetheart?" My dad grinned.

Having to give a response, I perked up. "I'm okay, Dad. Thanks for asking."

"There's the girl I remember," My dad smiled again, this time more sinister.

"Why did you knock me out with a hairdryer?" He asked.

"I-I-I-I don't remember that happening."

"Now now, Bottley boo, don't try to lie to your old man. I still remember what you did to me. I'm not mad, I just wanna talk. Why don't you come downstairs to chat?"

My dad took me by the arm and walked me downstairs.

"Why do you look concerned? Are you okay sweetie? I don't want my girl to have negative feelings."

"I'm fine," I shrugged.

As he was walking me down the stairs, I felt his hand reach down my sleeve. He touched my armpit and put his other hand on my chest.

"What are you doing?" I asked, pulling away.

My dad didn't answer. He just kept walking me down the stairs.

We made it downstairs. My dad sat on the couch, while I just stood in the hallway.

"So, what do you wanna talk about?" I steadily asked.

"Bottley, I was very hurt when you knocked me out with a blow dryer."

"I'm sorry, Dad, I-"

"Hush. It's okay, Bottle. I forgive you. I'm not mad. You're my angel."

"Thanks, Dad," I responded, deadpan. I knew he didn't mean anything

he said. He was a master at manipulation. That's why my mom left him.

"So, Bottley, can you do me a favor?" My dad asked, smiling straight at me.

"Yeah? What would you like?" I asked, fake-smiling.

"Can you get me a beer from the cooler?"

"Dad, you've already drunk seven cans today. It's not even evening yet," I argued.

"Now, Bottley boo, don't try to argue with me. You know the rules."

"No. I'm worried about you, Dad. I don't want you to ruin your life even more," I commented. Although my dad was considered one of the nastiest people alive by my friends, he was still family. Since I didn't like starting arguments much, I always tried to protect and obey him despite his actions.

"No! Get me a fucking beer. Now!" My dad snapped at me. He got up from the couch and started walking towards me. He walked closer to me. I backed up in fright as he slowly inched closer.

"NO! GET AWAY!" I screamed.

My dad grabbed my sleeve and lifted me to his face.

"Since you disobeyed me, I'm going to have to punish you," He smiled and started to laugh.

He dragged me to the kitchen where he pinned me to the counter.

"Hey, Bottle, why does your hair look shorter? You look more like a boy now."

"Why the fuck does that matter? Let go!" I screeched.

"No."

My dad lifted my shirt and started to feel my chest. I had enough. I

kicked him in the hand just hard enough for him to let go. I got up and started to run away. I made it to the front door, where I heard my dad laughing maniacally in the kitchen He didn't chase me, but I heard him searching for something in the kitchen. I ran out of the house, screaming for help.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PIE

What is wrong with me? Ever since I got home, I felt like shit. I feel like such a bad friend for letting Bottle go to her dad's house. What the fuck is wrong with me? I bet everyone in the friend group secretly hates me. I get it, I can be annoying at times, but I only do so to be funny and cheerful. Looking back on my previous actions, I hate myself for blaming Liy for all of this. I gave her so much shit for something she didn't mean. What was she doing now? Crying because of my actions? Fuck.

I thought about my friends, and what they thought of me. There were many voices in my head telling me things. Pillow changed. When we went to the graveyard, I didn't even recognize her the second time. She felt like a stranger to me. The only person in the world I had any sympathy for was Bottle.

I flopped on the bed and lit a cigarette. I texted Bottle.

Private DMs:

Pie: Hey, are you okay? You can come over any time if you need to.

Although I felt better after sending the message, I couldn't help but cry to myself because of how shit of a person I was. I put my cigarette out in the ashtray in my room, but out of rage, I slammed my counter, causing the glass ashtray to break on the ground, shattering into a million pieces.

On top of all this, ever since yesterday, I've been having nightmares of the Mexican war that almost killed me. I remembered the grenade that landed in my house and blew up everything I had ever loved. I remembered the cartels shooting blindly at people like me. The bullets whizzing by my head.

I decided to take a bath to calm myself down, but I didn't know that there was a glass shard in the pocket of my shorts. Since I considered myself, "built different", I bathed with my shorts on. I still took my top off and tossed it to the side. I started the warm water. It felt like heaven after everything. Although I felt good, I still regretted everything I had done and I was feeling like I was gonna die.

I pulled the shard of glass out of my pocket, but I ended up cutting myself on accident. I looked at my finger, which started to bleed profusely. What was weird was that I didn't feel any pain when I slit my finger. It felt... nice... But why? I had just gotten a cut on my finger. How the fuck would that feel good?

I raised the shard of glass again. My mind took over and I smiled at the shard I was holding. The voices in my head were telling me, "Kill" "You mean nothing anyways. Do it" "Don't be shy" "Everyone will be happier". No one liked me anyway, right? I dug the shard of glass into my left wrist. The pain felt good. The satisfaction was immeasurable. I stared at my wrist as the blood trickled down my hand. It started to collect on the bathroom floor. I took the bloodied hand and slit my right wrist too. I laid both my hands on my sides as the blood poured out.

It wasn't long until I started to feel light-headed. My eyes started to close and I could feel myself weakening. I smiled to myself, as I knew I was going to die. I looked up at the ceiling and recalled all of the memories I had made over my lifetime. I smiled to myself, remembering the first day I met Bottle and Pillow. The first time we had a playdate. The promises we made. The things we did. The times we defended each other and always had each other's backs. I continued to look up, as my life slipped away. I closed my eyes and smiled, knowing no one would have to put up with me anymore.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: BOTTLE

I called Pie on my phone. My dad stared at me through the window as I left the house. He was holding a metal tool. I couldn't make out what it was since he was so far away. I started to ring Pie, but she didn't answer. Strange. She told me she would always answer if I were to call. Her house was too far, and like hell I would go back to the house to retrieve my bike or car.

I started to sprint over to Pie's house. She lived slightly close, but not walking-friendly close. I ran by numerous houses and started to sprint faster. I started to sweat and my legs started to ache, but once I got to Pie's house, I knew I was home free. I continued to sprint down the city streets.

It wasn't long until I wound up at Pie's house. Since Pie trusted me, she gave me a copy of her house keys, which was a slightly dumb decision, but I appreciated her trust in me. I opened the door, locked it behind me, and hid. Surprisingly, I didn't see Pie in the house. The only thing I saw was her lighter on the ground. I felt the tip of the lighter, which was still hot, meaning she had recently used it.

I started searching the house for Pie.

"Pie! Are you home?"

No answer.

I assumed Pie wasn't home and stayed at her house for a couple of hours. I decided to spend the night here since I knew Pie wouldn't mind. I flopped on the couch and rested for a moment. I looked out the window to see if my dad would follow me. Nothing.

This made me relax. I still attempted to search for Pie, but I assumed she went for another walk, as she liked doing walks when it was evening. I checked the time, which read 6:00. Hungry, I decided to search her pantry for something. I felt like a bad friend taking advantage of her stuff, but I had done this in the past, and Pie got mad at me for not doing this sooner. I just wanted to make her proud.

The fridge had been recently restocked, as there was food everywhere.

"Huh, I didn't know Pie would be the one to restock her fridge," I pondered.

Once I found some food, I decided to make a quick snack.

"A sandwich will do for now," I commented, talking to myself.

I made the sandwich in a jiff. Although it wasn't the best, it filled me

up for the most part, and since I was tired from running from my dad, I needed a quick pick-me-up. Once I finished the sandwich, I went to use Pie's restroom.

I walked up the stairs and peeked in the rooms upstairs to see if Pie was playing a joke on me. I laughed to myself as I searched the rooms.

"No way she's in her room, right?"

I checked her room, but something felt off. I scouted the room and saw a dent in her nightstand with a broken cigarette ashtray on the ground. The floor was coated in ash and her recently-lit cigarette lay on her bedroom pillow. I examined everything. It wouldn't take a rocket scientist to conclude something was wrong.

I finally went to the bathroom and opened the door. Once I opened the bathroom door, I couldn't believe my very eyes. I rubbed my eyes to make sure I wasn't hallucinating. I pinched my arm so hard that I drew blood. I slapped myself in the face to confirm this was real. Was that... Pie? I walked over to her and saw her motionless in the bathtub. Her wrists were slit and there was a bloodied shard of glass on the ground. Her corpse was smiling up at the ceiling, and judging by how fresh the blood was, she had done it recently.

I dropped to my knees and put my hands over my face.

"NO! NO! NO! NO!" I started to scream.

All I could do was grieve for a moment. Tears clouded my vision as I struggled to breathe. I found her phone in the bathroom and tried to unlock it. I used her face to unlock her phone and I called 911.

The call:

Operator: 911. What's your emergency?

Bottle: Please come quickly. My friend committed suicide and I think there's still time to save her.

Operator: Okay, how did she commit suicide?

Bottle: She slit her wrists.

Operator: It's possible. What's your house address?

Bottle: 1590 Ocean Drive

Operator. Got it, multiple ambulances are on the way now.

Bottle: Thank you so much. Can I stay on the call for now?

Operator: Access granted. You may stay on the phone with me.

I stayed on the phone with the operator. I tried to cry softly so the operator wouldn't hear. I touched Pie's hand, feeling the coldness of her lifeless hand. I cried and cried while whispering.

"Pie, why? Why would you do this to yourself?"

I huddled myself inside my knees and continued to cry. The outside world didn't feel real anymore. Nothing did. All I did was look outside the window and wait until the ambulances arrived.

It didn't take long for paramedics to arrive, about three minutes. I opened the front door and told them where Pie was. Two men sprinted through the house and hauled Pie's body out of the house. They quickly put her body in a body bag.

"We'll do our best to revive her. I'm so sorry this had to happen," one of the men told me.

I couldn't speak straightly. "T-t-thank y-y-y-you," was all I could mutter.

I still couldn't latch onto the fact my best friend might be dead. I wished I was there for her. Why was I like this? I could do nothing but watch as the paramedics took her away.

After the paramedics left, I decided to follow them to the hospital. I sped about twenty miles over the speed limit, trying to tail the speeding ambulances. We eventually got to the destination and I hopped out of my car and texted my friends via Pie's phone.

Group Chat: (Lightning got added)

Pie (Bottle): Guys, come to the hospital. Now. This is Bottle typing. Something happened to Pie.

Pen: Holy shit. Tree and I will be there ASAP.

Liy: Got it. Coming now. I hope she's okay.

Pillow: What the fuck? What happened to Pie?

Bottle: No time to explain. Just come. Now.

Pillow: On my motorcycle. Almost there.

Lightning: I'm on my way. Hope we're not too late.

(Timeskip five minutes later)

I saw everyone arrive in the parking lot. The group rushed over and asked me questions.

"Bottle. How's Pie? What happened?" Pillow urgently asked.

"Pie attempted suicide."

"What? Holy shit. We gotta fucking move," Pillow rushed us.

We made it inside the hospital and I asked the front desk if we could visit Pie. The doctor nodded and led us to the room where they were taking care of Pie.

"The doctors will tell you when you can come in. In the meantime, just wait here."

The seven of us sat down. The atmosphere felt off. Everyone was silent. Pillow started to tear up a little bit. Pen and Tree looked at each other deadpan, not knowing what to do. Liy comforted Remote as she had her hands over her mouth and couldn't say a word.

I began to cry and heard a pat on the back. It was Lightning. He didn't say anything, but he hugged me gently and comforted me. It felt nice to have someone to comfort me since Pillow was too busy

crying to herself.

I remembered all the memories I had made with Pie, starting in Elementary. I remember finding Pie eating alone, as she had just moved. I remember making friends with her and talking with her. She was so cool. Ever since we met, she would always invite me over to her house and we would play games and hang out. We were inseparable ever since we were young. I remembered all those sleepovers we had. I remembered all those times we pranked others at school. I remember when Pie would keep me safe when I felt like I was in danger. I remember Pie standing up for me in Middle School. I... remembered... everything. The memories wouldn't stop flooding my mind.

The doctor soon came out of the office and told us the news. He had a saddened look on his face.

"She's... not going to make it."

-

This chapter was rather hard to write as well, as I hate writing sad stories. Thanks for reading this part! I still had fun writing since I knew that this chapter was super action-packed hahaha. Have a damn good day/night! :)

-

THANK YOU GUYS SO MUCH FOR 2K VIEWERS. I'm in shock that my dumb story could ever get this many reads. I expected my story to have like 500 reads at most when I first started. From the bottom of my heart, thank you all for reading my stories. I know I'm not the best writer, but I'm trying to improve my storytelling by the day. Once again, have a damn good day/night! :DDD

Chapter 27: Publishing 12/06/23

Chapter 27 - Pen

WARNING: GRIEF AND MENTIONS OF SUICIDE

I couldn't believe it. Pie was gone. I never saw this coming. Pie was always the tough cookie I had always had in my life. She made the days of high school bearable. She would always protect others and didn't take shit from anyone. She was one of the coolest people I had ever met. I was in dismay when the doctor said those six words.

Everyone around was now crying, including myself. The doctor opened the door and let us into the room. We saw Pie's unconscious body lying on the hospital bed. We saw her wrists soaked in dried blood. Pillow did nothing but just stare at Pie's dead body. She was almost expressionless. I glanced over at her and she just... stared. It was like something in her brain turned off and she was in a state of shock she couldn't escape.

The doctor came by our sides and told us everything.

"I'm so sorry for your guys' loss. We did everything we could to save her. I think it would be best for me to leave you guys alone for now."

"Thanks, doctor. You did your best," I smiled with a tear in my eye.

We continued to stay in the room for about fifteen minutes until the doctor ushered us out of the room. Everyone but Liy left the room. Remote stayed outside. We heard Liy mumbling something towards Pie. I put my ear to the door to listen to what Liy was saying.

"Pie, I'm so sorry for everything. This was all my fault. I allowed this to happen. I was the reason you did what you did. I hope you're resting well in your new place. I always loved you like a sister. You're one of the coolest, nicest people I have ever met. We've had our disagreements from time to time, but I never lost my respect for you. I have always thought you were one of the best people I have ever

met in my life. Rest easy, Pie." Liy mumbled.

Liy left the room, her face soaked in tears. Remote comforted her and wiped her tears with a sleeve. Lightning also cried a little. I felt bad for him. He had just joined our friend group and this was one of the first things he had witnessed while being part of the group.

We all left the hospital with tears in our eyes. I saw Bottle pull something out of her pocket.

I put my arm around her. "What's that" I curiously asked with a slightly saddened tone.

"It's the last thing we can remember Pie by. Her favorite lighter," Bottle continued to sniffle.

"I see."

Pie's lighter was one of the core things we had of her. Since her lighter was refillable, she had been using it since we had met in high school. There were her initials carved onto the lighter's handle and when you lit the flame, the flame would turn pink. We could see the burn marks and the wear and tear, but it was still very worth having.

Bottle showed the lighter to everyone and we all examined her prized possession.

"Should we put this on Pie's grave during her funeral?"

All of us nodded.

Tree and I got on our bikes and went home. The ride back was dark, but our bikes had nightlights on so we could see in the dark. The ride back was eerie. We both missed Pie already. Pillow had told us in a text that she would plan the burial for Pie and that we should bury her in her backyard. Tree seemed visibly upset by everything and he seemed affected by this entire ordeal. What had this thing done to us?

We arrived back at home and parked our bikes. Tree and I walked inside the house and we were both dead silent.

Both of us sat on the couch and started watching TV. I decided to start a conversation, even though I figured it wouldn't be the best time to judging by the recent events.

"Are you hungry? I can make you something to eat."

"No, Pen, I'm okay. Thanks for the offer though," Tree smiled.

We started to talk to each other about the whole ordeal. We talked until it was about 9:00 at night. After the clock struck 9, we both decided to go to sleep, as we would have a busy day tomorrow since Pillow planned a funeral.

I walked upstairs and said goodnight to Tree. We both walked over to our rooms and started getting ready. I got changed and took a shower. While in the shower, all I could think about was the fact Pie wouldn't be with us anymore. I tried to accept it, but my mind wouldn't let me. I felt like I was going insane again. I didn't tell Tree about it, as I didn't want to traumatize him further. I proceeded to go to bed, falling asleep rather quickly.

I woke up the next morning to see Tree sleeping on the couch. It turned out, he didn't go up to his room to sleep. He was just too tired from the day before so he didn't bother even going upstairs to sleep. I didn't wake him up and I did a good deed and made him breakfast. I made his favorite food, salmon teriyaki.

I started cooking, trying to be as discreet as possible to not wake him.

"Breakfast... is... served..." I delivered him some food.

"Wow! Pen! You didn't have to cook me something this morning!" Tree smiled.

"I always know what you want," I smirked at Tree.

"No, you don't. I see you're lying."

"I never lie."

We both laughed and ate breakfast together. The fact I made Tree food made his day. The day before, he wouldn't even talk to me. I

figured it was because of the entire ordeal of Pie committing suicide. We decided to play a couple of games before we would show up to the funeral. I already knew what I would wear, so I played some games with Tree.

"You're so bad at this game," I mocked Tree.

"Nuh-uh! It's just that I can't play for shit today!" Tree grimaced.

"You always make the lamest excuses when we play."

"No, I don't! I'm being serious! If you weren't so lucky, I would cream you in every game we play."

"Sure, sure. Luck runs out, skill doesn't, which is why I always beat you."

I ended up demolishing Tree in every game we played.

Since it was almost time for us to go to the funeral, we decided to hop off the game and get changed.

I picked out a tuxedo from my closet. My entire persona was dressing too casually for certain events, but this was an exception. I styled my hair, took my cap off, wore a black and white tux, and strapped on some dress shoes. The outfit was super uncomfortable, I would do anything to show respect to Pie.

I picked a rose out of my neighbor's garden. Although he wouldn't like it, I decided to do so, as this was a one-time event.

"Okay, Pen! I'm ready to go!" Tree called from outside. I was still pondering how Black Hole would afford to buy Tree a car for his birthday! His birthday was in about two weeks too! Nonetheless, we decided to take Tree's car to the funeral. Luckily, Pie's house wasn't too far, so the drive was rather short. We listened to some tunes on the way and Tree decided to wear some shades while he rode. Although he had to wear glasses, he could still see fine without them.

When we arrived at Pie's house, Tree noticed something nearby.

"What's that?" He pointed to a paper strapped to a telephone pole.

We walked over and examined the paper. It was another missing poster. The person on it was a messy-haired girl with a large smile. She was wearing a punk-rock jacket in her picture and smiled straight at the camera.

"Who's Mic?" Tree asked.

"I don't know. Probably some random," I shrugged.

We both walked away and got to Pie's house. We were met with everyone inside talking with each other. We were waiting for everyone to arrive. I noticed that there were also parents there. Everyone's parents were there, except Bottle's dad for obvious reasons. Even Lightning's parents showed up. Lightning's dad caught me looking at him and waved.

"Hello! Pen, right?" The tall fellow introduced himself.

"Yep! It's nice to meet you, Mr. Bolt!" I introduced myself and shook his hand.

"Lightning told me all about you," He smiled.

"Oh really? What did he tell you?" I slightly laughed.

"He said you're super cool and he wants to be like you," Mr. Bolt chuckled.

I laughed at this statement. "Oh, please. It would be a bad idea for Lightning to be exactly like me."

Mr. Bolt laughed along with me. "Well, it's nice meeting ya, kid!"

Mr. Bolt was a great guy. He talked with Tree too. Surprisingly, Tree thought he was okay, as he usually despised new people. Mr. Bolt told us all about Lightning, how he had always felt like he was an "outcast" and that he would never feel accepted. He thanked us for letting him make friends with us, as he mentioned that he didn't have any friends growing up and he had never seen Lightning so passionate about someone.

"Dad! What are you telling them?" Lightning darted across the room

to his dad.

"Don't worry, son, I didn't tell them anything "secretive," Mr. Bolt chuckled.

We chatted with the others for a bit until Pillow started the funeral. She had lined everything up outside. Chairs, a casket, flowers, everything. The funeral went by rather quickly, as we didn't want to dwell on this too much. No one cried, but everyone had an extremely saddened look. We all went up and gave speeches about Pie. Although her parents still didn't know about this, Remote's mom offered to break the news to them. Bottle waited to give her speech last.

Bottle gave her speech last and put the lighter on Pie's grave. She covered the lighter with dirt and put some remnants of Pie's old ashtray on the grave too.

"Pie. I'm so sorry you had to go out like this. You were always the bright, shining star in my life. I remember the days when you would be my friend when no one else would. You were one of the first friends I had ever made. The memories we made together over the years will forever sit with me. You're the best person I have ever met in my 17 years on this planet. You would always crack jokes when no one else would. You would always defend others and keep others safe from anything. Although you're not with us now, everyone here will always remember you. Thank you, Pie, for everything you have done for us."

Bottle shed a tear and so did everyone else.

After about 45 minutes, the funeral ended. Everyone left the house and we decided to not take anything from the house, as we wanted to leave everything as it was. Pie would probably let us take whatever we wanted, but we played it safe and left.

The group decided to hang out later that day. For now, we all parted ways. Tree and I got in our car and drove off. The drive was short, but it felt like an eternity. Tree and I still talked about our usual antics. I hated dressing nicely for events. The scratchiness of my suit irritated me throughout the entire funeral.

Once Tree and I entered the house, I instantly changed out of my suit, as I hated the collar on the suit. I quickly changed into some comfier clothes, like some pajamas.

"Pen, can you explain why you're wearing pajamas when it's 1 in the afternoon?"

"Cause I feel like it," I snidely replied to Tree.

"Typical Pen."

We laughed for a bit until Tree asked for a favor.

"Pen, is it okay if my parents pay a visit for a bit? They're rarely in town these days," Tree nervously asked me.

"Sure! Just let me change out of these stupid pajamas."

I changed into actual clothes and went downstairs. Tree and I played some games for about thirty or so minutes until we heard the doorbell ring.

Tree opened the door and his parents walked in, along with his sister, who was still only ten years old.

"Hi, Tree!" His family members said in sync.

"Hi mom, hi dad," Tree stated, deadpan.

"Tree, please emphasize your sister," Tree's mom laughed.

"Fine! Hello, Sprout," Tree rolled his eyes.

"This must be your friend, Pen." Tree's mom stated.

"Yup. I'd say you're right!"

I nervously waved at them. They waved back with a smile. Tree told me about his parents, but I had never met them in real life. It was weird that Tree's parents would send him off so early, but it made sense because Tree's parents weren't very rich and couldn't afford to take care of Tree.

"Mom! Why does Tree's friend look like a movie star?" Tree's little sister asked.

Everyone, including me, started laughing.

"You see that, Tree? I told you I was goodmovie material," I gloated.

"Yeah, yeah, save it, Pen."

We hung out with Tree's family for a couple of hours. Saying they were nice was an understatement. Tree had it easy. His parents were nearly perfect. It was clear they loved Tree very much, even though Tree tried to brush them off out of embarrassment.

After a few hours, Tree's family decided to pack up and leave. We waved them goodbye and Tree's sister commented on Tree one last time.

"Tree, you should take lessons on how to get taller from your friend."

Tree got mad and turned bright red. I was in hysterics, laughing on the floor from the comment. I looked up at Tree, who wasn't too impressed with me.

"Tree! Your sister knows what's up!!" I hollered out laughing.

"Yeah... for sure..." Tree sarcastically sniggered.

I got up and we decided to finish the night by going out to hang out with some friends. Everyone in the friend group said they could come, as today was rather dull according to my friends.

Tree and I got ready to leave. The group decided to hang out at a local cafe and get some drinks. Neither Tree nor I could pass up the offer, as we were both feeling like a cuppa Joe.

It didn't take long for us to drive there, as the coffee shop was only about seven minutes away from our house. We pulled into the parking lot to see all of our friends chatting in front of the cafe. We greeted them with a smile.

"Wait... where's Lightning? I thought he said he'd come," I asked.

"Beats me, he probably ghosted us," Liy rolled her eyes.

That's when we all saw Lightning pull into the parking lot on his skateboard. Lightning wasn't the sharpest tool in the shed. I knew this since he set the back of his skateboard on fire and continued to ride it down the street. A part of his shoe caught on fire, burning the rubber under it.

"Wassup, guys!" Lightning waved.

"That was SICK," I commented, giving Lightning a high-five.

"Lightning, that was dangerous. You could hurt yourself," Remote exhaled.

"Who cares? That was dope."

We all shared a laugh and walked into the coffee shop. We all ordered iced teas and drank them outside. We watched as the sun started to set. The time was 5:00 pm. Although it was early, I needed a pick-me-up from the gathering and funeral we had the same day.

"So, how are your guys' summers so far?" Lightning asked, noticing everyone was rather silent.

"Could be better," I answered

"Agreed."

We all stared into the sunset until Bottle started to tear up.

"Pie loved watching the sunset."

"I bet she did. She's probably watching with us right now as we speak," Pillow smiled.

"Yeah, she'd still be here if that stupid thing wasn't haunting us," Liy insensitively grunted.

"That's a fact. I feel like we could've done more to prevent that," Remote patted her on the back.

"Tomorrow, we WILL get revenge on this thing," Liy looked at the group with determination in her eyes.

"I don't know, Liy, that seems kind of dangerous considering the fact we know what it is capable of," Pillow explained.

"I could care less, we will take this fucking thing down for good, for Pie."

-

Hello, my readers! I know this chapter was overly sad in some ways, but hey, every book needs filler chapters, am I right? I'm sorry this chapter was slightly shorter. It's because the next chapter will be SUPER action-packed haha. Thanks so much for reading this chapter of FEARS, and have a damn good day/night! :))

Chapter 28: Publishing 12/08/23

Chapter 28 - Liy (PART 1 OF 2)

I woke up the next morning in my apartment with one mission on my mind. Take revenge. I got up extra early since I wanted to prepare myself for what I might have to face. I told all my friends to meet me at the graveyard at approximately 12:30 that day. In the meantime, I decided to eat breakfast and train myself mentally for what would come about today.

The morning was rather dull. I sat on my phone the entire morning and scrolled through social media. I noticed that more and more people were going missing this past week. Heck, even Snowball went missing. Although he had been missing for quite some time, the disappearances made me even more determined to take this thing down once and for all.

Remote invited me over to her house that noon. I went over to her house at around 11 and waited outside. Remote's mom let me in and greeted me with a smile.

"Hi, Liy!" Remote's mom smiled.

"Hello!" I waved, deadpan.

"Would you like something to eat? I'm preparing breakfast now," Remote's mom offered.

"No thanks, I'm okay. I already ate," I laughed.

"Oh, okay. Remote's in her room. First door on the right after you go up the stairs."

"Okay, thanks Mrs. Acidof!"

I strutted up the steps and met Remote in her room. We hugged each other for some time and kissed each other on the cheek.

"Liy! Why did you ask to hang out?" Remote eagerly asked.

"No reason. I just wanted to spend some time with the best person in the world," I snidely remarked.

"That's fair," Remote giggled.

"So, wanna go out or something? I heard there's a new shop at the mall we can look at."

"I don't see why not."

We both left the house and hopped in the car I used to drive over to Remote's place.

"Did you get the interior done?" Remote asked.

"Yep! How'd you know?"

"It's obvious. The seats feel smoother and the leather feels rather refined."

"Damn, I should've taken you seriously when you said that you were an expert on cars."

"Liy, you should always take me seriously," Remote laughed.

"Nope. Not in a million years," I shrugged.

"Ok fine, fair enough."

We eventually arrived at our destination. Lucky for us, we also met Tree, Pen, and Lightning there too. I don't know if it was a coincidence, but either way, it was strange how they read our minds to go see the new store that opened just yesterday.

"You guys checking out the new store too?" Pen asked.

"Yup."

All five of us walked into the store. The shelves were filled with cool items. This store wasn't like any other I'd ever seen. There were three stories, each connected by an escalator. The store was like a

superstore, selling everything you could think of.

Remote immediately dashed to the gaming section. Her eyes filled with joy as she saw a limited-edition controller.

"We'll meet you guys downstairs in about thirty," I smiled at the boys.

"Sure. We'll be in the sports section if you need us for any reason," Tree remarked.

Remote looked up and down the shelves in awe.

"LIY LOOK! THEY HAVE IT!"

"What do they have?" I asked, laughing.

"THE LIMITED EDITION KRIBY CONTROLLER," Remote squealed.

I started laughing and asked why she needed it. Remote instantly took it off the shelf and held it as we continued to shop throughout the store. Although I was out, my mind was fixated on stopping the entity from harming anyone else.

(Timeskip until the friends exit the store)

Remote paid for her controller and we left the store. We met the boys outside, drinking some iced tea.

"Isn't that unhealthy? We drank tea yesterday too. That's a lot of sugar," I commented.

"It's summer, mom," Tree snidely remarked. The others started laughing at this statement.

"Haha Tree, very funny," I sarcastically rolled my eyes.

We left the mall and we all met in the parking lot outside.

We were all about to part ways.

"Wait, Liy, where you headed after this?" Lightning asked.

"Oh, I'm thinking of taking the dumb entity down myself."

"Are you insane? You know what that thing is capable of?" Tree stared at me like I was crazy.

"I don't care. That thing took our friend from us. I'll never forget that."

"Look, just because you want revenge, doesn't mean it's the best option," Pen softly smiled.

"Like I said, Pen, I don't care."

Remote and I started to walk away until Lightning got our attention.

"Wait!"

"Huh?"

"We'll come along too. It would be selfish to just let you fight that thing on your own, even if it means we have a risk of getting injured in the process," Lightning smiled.

"Really? You'd do that for me?" I asked.

"Yup, we ARE your friends for a reason, right guys?" Lightning smiled.

Pen and Tree nodded.

"If you say so..." I still felt bad about taking them with me.

Since all three biked, we loaded their bikes into the trunk and set off to the graveyard. Pen texted Pillow and Bottle to tag along too. Pen told us they were hesitant, but they ended up agreeing since they too wanted to get revenge for Pie.

We all ended up at the graveyard. Bottle was tired and glared at Pillow.

"Next time, don't slam the gas on your motorcycle. I thought I was gonna die," Bottle gritted her teeth.

Pillow lightly chuckled. "Sorry, I thought you could handle it."

While we were talking, I remembered one thing... the security cameras!

"Guys! Remember those security cameras we set up the other day?"

"Yeah?"

"We should check those to see if we captured any footage!"

I pulled out my phone to check the security cameras. We had placed a total of fifteen cameras around the property, but fourteen of them were black, showing no signal.

"That's really strange. I charged them fully beforehand."

The only camera that worked was the camera Pie had placed inside the abandoned building.

"I'll check the replays."

I wound back the footage and the group watched the replay cautiously. There was nothing at first and we got bored after the first thirty seconds.

"Meh, I knew there was nothing here," Tree shrugged.

Right as Tree said that something popped up on the camera. We saw the entity. It paced around the center of the room, mumbling to itself. It walked over to the far wall of the building and stomped on one of the loose floorboards. When it stomped, a hidden trapdoor underneath the floor opened. It descended into the darkness as we kept watching.

"Holy. Shit."

"Okay, we know where this thing is. I'm going to go and confront it whether you guys like it or not."

I walked to the front door of the tattered building. My friends ran after me.

"Wait, Liy! You can't go in there!" Remote asserted. "This is crazy."

I exhaled. "Look, you don't have to come in with me. What's gonna happen when another kid goes missing for no reason? Or another Snowball? Or another Microphone? Or even one of us? Are you guys just going to pretend it isn't happening? I can't. I go home and all I can think about is the fact Pie is gone. So walking into this creepy, shithole of a building, is easier than walking into my apartment."

Everyone was dead silent. The rest of my friends just stared at me, trying to contemplate what I had just explained.

"I felt that speech from the middle of my heart," Pen mentioned.

I started to walk inside the building.

"WAIT!" one of my friends said from behind.

"We'll come too." Pen, Tree, and Bottle stepped forward.

"What about m-" Lightning was cut off.

"No, you and the rest stay outside and we'll call for you if we need help.

I slid the door to the building open. The door's hinges were less rusty now. The four of us cautiously stepped inside and peered at our surroundings. I recognized all of this. The night we played truth or dare, Bottle showed us the images of the interior. We walked through the building and found the loose plank that activated the trapdoor.

"Step aside. I got this," Pen smiled.

Pen stepped on the loose board and the trapdoor from underneath swung open. I peered down the trapdoor and saw a ladder, which seemed to descend into the center of the earth.

"We doing this?" Tree asked.

"Yup."

I climbed down first, with the others following me. The ladder was

about thirty feet long. I dropped to the bottom and saw something I didn't think I would see. Underneath the trapdoor was a fully-furnished house. The walls were peeling, and the furniture was dirty, but it was remarkable, to say the least.

I led the pack and we slowly walked through the house. I took another step and heard the crumpling noise of paper under my feet.

Bottle picked up the paper. What was there scared me half to death. On the paper was a missing poster of Bottle. She looked identical in the poster just like in real life, but this poster had drops of blood around the letters in the word, "MISSING". I shuddered and stared at the image.

"Bottle, relax, none of this is real. You're not going to go missing," I comforted her.

"No! This is too real. It has everything. My shirt, my face, my hair. EVERYTHING!" Bottle screamed, going into a panic attack shortly after lifting the image.

"No Bottle, That shit isn't real. None of this is. This is just the entity playing tricks on us." I reassured.

The other boys stared at us with their hands over their mouths. I proceeded to rip the paper in front of her and stomp it into the dirt. I took a breather and calmed myself before we continued. We continued through the large, open-area house until I heard a noise. The faint noise reached from above like a faint cry in the wind.

"HISS"

"Did you guys hear that?" Tree asked.

"Yeah, that was as clear as daylight," Bottle agreed.

We all looked up a flight of stairs. The stairs seemed to reach about three stories.

"Guess we can't do anything but go up," Pen commented.

We nervously walked up the stairs. We were all dead silent, trying to

muffle our footsteps as we walked up the dusty flight of stairs. We walked up the stairs until Pen noticed something on the ground. He picked it up and blew the dust off. It was a person's shoe. The insole had the initials S.B. on them.

"What. The. Fuck..." Pen said out loud. "This was Snowball's favorite shoe."

We examined the shoe and we all recognized it. "Okay, this has to be where this thing lives," I mentioned.

"No shit, Sherlock!" Tree rolled his eyes.

We continued up the stairs until we saw a long hallway. There were many doors on either side. We continued down the hallway until we heard a noise from the room ahead. We went to examine it and saw a figure. It was... Snowball. He was alive and we heard his breathing.

"No, no, this can't be real! Snowball is dead," I thought to myself.

We got closer and saw Snowball stare up at us with fear in his eyes. Snowball coughed up blood and continued to breathe heavily on the floor.

"S-s-snowball?" Pen shook.

We stared at him for a couple of seconds until he got pulled away into the shadows by an unknown force. We watched as he got dragged farther into the room and he was slowly eaten alive by something. We couldn't see him, but all we could hear were his screams echoing throughout the house.

"No. Fuck this. I can't do this shit anymore," Pen started to walk away.

The rest of us followed Snowball into the room. We darted inside and saw nothing.

"What the hell? He was just here!" Bottle exclaimed

Tree was shaking with fear and Bottle and I just stared at the now-empty wall.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: THIRD PERSON

Pen started to walk away from the group. He turned away for a brief moment and collected his thoughts before he wanted to go back with the group. He turned around and started walking the other way by himself. Pen heard a growl at the end of the hall. He went to go examine it on his own. He slowly inched himself toward the end of the darkened hallway, keeping his hands up just in case the worst happened.

Pen inched closer to the door and was about to examine the sound, when all of a sudden, he heard a loud slam behind him. The door of the room his friends walked into slammed with remarkable force. Pen snapped out of his trance and started sprinting towards the door.

"Guys? GUYS! HELP!!!" Pen ran towards the door.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: LIY

The door closed behind us with a loud bang. We heard Pen call from the other side of the door, screaming for help. I tried to open the door, but the door was stuck shut. All of us tried pulling on the door to open it, but our combined strength wasn't enough to force the door open. We continued to try, determined to save Pen.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: THIRD PERSON

Pen was almost at the door. He could feel his breath wafting back in his face as he ran. He got about twenty feet from the door. That's when the flooring of the hallway broke, separating Pen from his friends.

"WHAT THE FUCK???" Pen shrieked.

He looked down the hole. Since the four friends walked up three stories, the drop was long and far. Pen peered down the hole, uncertain of what he would do next. After peering down the hole for a while, Pen felt a hand tap his shoulder.

TAP TAP

-

OHH BROTHER!! What a cliffhanger. If you didn't know already, this is the juicy chapter. It's so action-packed, that I decided to divide it into two parts. I didn't want to drop a 5000+ chapter on you guys haha. Thanks for reading, and have a damn good day/night! :DD

Chapter 28 (PART 2 OF 2): Publishing 12/10/23

Chapter 28 - Liy (PART 2 OF 2)

WARNING: DETAILED VIOLENT SCENES

If you haven't read part 1, I strongly suggest you read it, as you wouldn't understand the events of this chapter if you haven't read part 1 yet haha. Enjoy!

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PEN

Once I felt the hand on my shoulder, my body froze with fear. I slowly turned around to see a hideous, zombie-like apparition standing right in front of me. It was tall but was missing an arm. Its eye was popped out of its socket and its skin was rotting away.

"You forget you were the one who dug me up?" The corpse moaned in a raspy voice.

"SHIT!" I screamed out. I got so scared, I blacked out. I felt myself fall three stories down through the hole. After that, all I could think about was if my friends would be okay with this thing on the prowl. I looked up for a split second to see the rotting corpse evilly smiling back at me, waving the arm it still had.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TREE

Liy, Bottle, and I continued to try to force the door open. We tried everything, but the door wouldn't budge. I knew it was a bad idea to come here.

Moments later, I heard a voice call out to me from another room.

"***Treeeee***"

I looked over at the room and saw a figure of Pie. I curiously walked inside the room. To be safe, I put a piece of loose scrap metal I found

in the room between the door to create a makeshift door jam, ensuring I wouldn't get locked in just in case the worst happened. Liy and Bottle didn't notice me leave and examined the room myself. I could still hear Liy and Bottle calling out to Pen.

"Pen! Open the fucking door!" Bottle yelled.

"We aren't playing games! Open the door now!"

I shrugged and continued inside the room. I looked around the room, which was filled with mannequins. Each one was covered in clown makeup and there were many stuffed clowns around the room. The overall feeling of the room was uneasy, but I continued to the end of the room until I made it to the figure of Pie.

I walked up to the figure, but I blinked and it disappeared. There was a music box left behind on the ground. I picked it up and examined it. To be safe, I cranked it away from myself. I cranked the box, but all I could hear were the sounds of children screaming. Terrified, I decided to sprint out of the room.

I went to sprint out of the room. Liy had noticed me on the other side. She stared at me as I ran back. To my dismay, the door slammed shut, locking me inside.

"Tree! TREE!" Liy squealed.

"Liy! OPEN THE DOOR!" I screamed with terror.

The lights started to flicker inside the room and I looked behind me. The music box was gone. I looked back at some of the mannequins. Their faces were now more grotesque and were covered in blood. I saw a golden casket on the ground. I walked closer and was instantly met with the casket lid opening. The same clown I had seen when I walked home leaped out of the coffin. It stood on top of the casket and smirked.

"Beep Beep, Tree!" The clown honked its nose before laughing maniacally.

The clown darted at me with tremendous speed. Its teeth flared at my face. Its limbs are like rubber. It stretched its arm out at me to try to

grab me. I ran for my life to the door. With a stroke of luck, Liy and Bottle were able to force the door open when they heard my footsteps. I busted through the door and flopped on the ground. Liy shut the door behind us.

"HOLY SHIT! ARE YOU GOOD?" Liy questioned.

I coughed and got up from my near-death experience. Our nightmares weren't over yet. Behind us in the same room, a toxic, red fluid started leaking from the adjacent wall. The fluid seemed to decompose the floor, meaning the fluid could easily corrode and melt our skin. We had to find a way out, fast.

We turned around and saw three doors. Each door was labeled with one of our names.

"What the fuck do we do? What the fuck do we do?" Bottle asked solemnly

"Ugh... I don't know! I don't fucking know!" I yelled out.

Time was ticking. It wouldn't be long until the corrosive substance melted us alive.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PEN

I woke up in a daze. The fall made me black out. I attempted to push myself up, but a sharp pain hit me in the forearm. I looked down at my left arm and saw my arm was bent the other way. I touched it and winced in pain, afraid for my safety. I rested for a moment until I heard a creaking noise.

The noise came from the door adjacent to the room. The door swung open, and a tall, slender monster emerged from the shadows. Its mouth evilly smiled at me, while it drooled saliva on the floor. Its eyes glowed red, and its limbs looked like they were made of rubber, stretching and bending at impossible angles as it walked toward me.

"Oh? Nice to see you, Pen!" The monster mocked.

All I could do was crawl back on my healthy arm. The monster slowly walked towards me, mocking my heavy breathing. It backed

me into a corner and stared me down. Its arm stretched out longer and grabbed me by the throat. It moved in closer, its smile widened and showed the stains of blood on its teeth.

"Yess!!! Give it to me... that fear... sweet sweet fear..." The monster grinned.

I cried and whimpered, not daring to utter a word towards the entity.

"Don't worry, this will be over soon..." The entity opened its mouth and was about to eat me.

I screamed out one last time.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: REMOTE

Lighting, Pillow and I were waiting outside. We eagerly waited for the others to come out of the house. It had been fifteen minutes! Where were they? I wondered for a moment, but my thoughts were interrupted by a loud crash.

"You guys heard that, right?" Pillow uttered.

"Yeah... Something's not right. We have to go in ASAP," Lightning motioned.

All three of us soon darted inside the house. We knew where the trapdoor was, so we continued. Before we left to go inside the house, Pillow found a piece of loose rebar from the building. She smacked it against the ground, forming a sharp end, and gave it to me.

"Take this," Pillow informed.

We sprinted inside the house, as we knew the others needed our help.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: LIY

The corrosive substance was halfway across the room. We all faced a dilemma. Which door would we pick? We hastily opened Tree's door and we were met with a clown. It sprinted at us with a murderous smile, laughing. We quickly shut the door and continued to hear the laughter on the other side of the door.

"Wait... If clowns are my worst fear and we saw it behind my name, then the things behind these doors must signify our worst fears." Tree observed.

"I'm scared of the dark... We should try my door next," Bottle exclaimed.

The corrosive substance was almost at our feet. It burned the rubber off my shoe a tiny bit.

At the last second, we busted through Bottle's door. We were right. The door led into the hallway of the house.

"Oh, thank fuck!" Bottle exhaled.

When we got to the other side, we heard Pen's cries for help. We sprinted over to the place where we heard him.

"HELP! HELP!" We heard Pen scream.

"THERE!" I pointed to an open door.

We sprinted in and saw the monster with its hand on Pen's throat. The monster pushed Pen to the side and turned its attention to us.

"Hello, guys!" The monster greeted.

All we could do was stand in shock as to what we were witnessing. We were all frozen in fear.

"Is this real enough for you, Liy??? Am I real enough for you?" The monster questioned.

"Holy shit..." Bottle whispered from behind me.

"Well, it was certainly real enough for your parents!" The monster cackled. ***"Let's have a family reunion in the sky, shall we?"***

"HAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!!"

Before any of us could react, the monster charged at us. It ran at an abnormally fast pace. I closed my eyes, awaiting my death. I braced

for impact, wondering if I would ever see the real world again.

Just as we were about to die to the entity, Remote jumped out of the shadows.

"Welcome to my world, BITCH!" Remote hurled herself through the air. She stabbed the creature straight in the eye, the end of the spear going out the back of the creature's head. We stopped for a second. Remote let go of the spear and left it sticking inside the creature's eye. The creature stopped in its tracks and stood motionless after Remote initially stabbed it.

We took this time and ran over to Pen, who was still on the ground with a broken arm.

"PEN! PEN! GET UP!" Bottle tried to help Pen up.

We got distracted. Pen was screaming. As we tried to help Pen up, he continued to scream his lungs out. We didn't know why he was being so incoherent, but we soon knew the answer. Pen pointed behind us and we turned around. The entity started to move again.

It swiveled its head 180 degrees and faced us. The smile it once wore was now more grotesque and there was blood dripping from its chin. Its face was now disfigured. The eye that still functioned started to drip blood and we saw the creature's hands go from normal to having sharp claws on the ends of its fingers.

This time, the entity wasn't playing games. It slowly walked over, growling. It started to growl and turned its attention to me, Bottle, Tree, and Pen. At this point, all of us were screaming in fear. The other three could do nothing, but watch.

The entity let out a blood-curdling roar right in our direction. It spat blood onto us and we all flinched back.

"HAHAHAHAHA!!!" The entity started to laugh at our fear.

That's when the entity swiftly whipped around and turned its attention to the other three. It quickly turned and lifted its arm out. It scratched Pillow straight across the stomach. She dropped to the ground, gripping her wounds. Lightning caught her before she fell to

the ground.

Pillow didn't cry. She was too scared to. The entity retreated to the basement of the open house and shut the door. Determined to take the monster down, I followed the monster to the basement. It opened a sewer drain in the ground and jumped down into the sewer before I could catch up to it.

Pen was still incoherently screaming.

"DO NOT TOUCH ME! DO NOT FUCKING TOUCH ME!"

Tree and Bottle both worriedly stared at Pen and cared for him.

"PEN, I DON'T GIVE A SHIT ANYMORE! I'M GOING TO SNAP YOUR ARM INTO PLACE" Tree yelled.

Tree took Pen by the arm and snapped it back into place.

"SHIT!"

"OKAY WE GOTTA GET THE FUCK OUTTA HERE!" Lightning screamed.

Tree picked Pen up and we all sprinted out of the house. It was hard to climb the ladder back to the surface, but Tree and Lightning worked together to hoist Pen up the ladder. We eventually made it out of the abandoned building. I kept running, not daring to look back.

I went to start the car. We loaded everyone in the back. Pillow left her motorcycle at the graveyard and I turned the key. The worst thing happened. The car was out of gas.

"SHIT! SHIT!" I started to search.

Pen pulled his phone out of his pocket with his working arm. He called his mom to pick him up and take him to the hospital.

"Pen, are you dumb? Why did you call your mom and not 911?" Tree asked.

"Cause, she knows exactly where the best medical center is."

We all hopped out of the car and waited for Pen's mom to arrive.

(Timeskip ten minutes until Pen's mom arrived)

"YOU! YOU! YOU GUYS DID THIS!" Pen's mom was pissed, pointing to all of us. I always knew she was not a nice woman. Tree told me all about her. That's why Pen went to live with Tree.

Pen's mother dragged Pen into her car and angrily put him in the front seat.

"You guys know how delicate Pen is," Pen's mom angrily stated.

"Ma'am, we were attacked-" Tree was cut off

"DON'T TRY TO LIE TO ME YOUNG MAN!"

Pen's mom jumbled through her purse and dropped her wallet on the ground.

"I'll get that for you-" Bottle was cut off by Pen's mom again.

"GET BACK!" Pen's mom pushed Bottle away. She stared at all of us with rage in her eyes.

"YOU GUYS ARE ALL MONSTERS! MONSTERS! WE ARE DONE HERE!"

We all stared at her in silence as she drove Pen away. We could hear her yelling at Pen in the car. Yeesh.

We walked around the corner and went a couple hundred feet away from the graveyard. The six of us stared at each other in disbelief.

"Alright, guys, we know where the monster lives, and next time we go back, we'll be better prepared," I explained.

"FUCK NO!" Tree cried. "No next time, Liy! You're fucking insane!"

"Why not? No one else is going to stop this thing from hurting anyone else," Remote calmly reasoned.

"Pen was nearly killed! And look at her! She's bleeding all over the place!" Bottle snapped and pointed at Pillow, who was clutching her bleeding stomach.

"This shit isn't going to go away. Pillow, you said yourself that the monster only resides in Goiky!" Remote elaborated.

"So what? I'll be moving soon and starting a new life somewhere else anyways," Pillow rolled her eyes.

"I'm sorry, but who the hell let her speak?" Bottle rudely stated.

Remote flipped her off and glared at her.

"I'm just saying, let's face facts," Bottle glared at me.

I stared back at her, deadpan.

"Pie is dead. Don't try to get us killed using a stupid coping mechanism to get over your dead parents," Bottle clenched her fist and snapped at me.

Tears filled my eyes. "SHUT UP!" I walked up to her. Bottle put a hand out to stop me.

"You couldn't save them, but you can still save yourself," Bottle tried to calmly de-escalate the situation.

"N-NO! Y-YOU T-T-TAKE IT BACK!" I pointed to her chest, tears clouding my vision.

"I know you're scared, we all are, but TAKE IT BACK!" I pushed Bottle away from me.

Bottle stepped back about six feet and ran up to me. She pushed me in the chest too.

I lost myself. I ran back up to her and punched her square in the face. I saw blood on my knuckle.

"LIY!" Remote screamed.

She fell to the ground with a thud and got back up. Tree and Lightning grabbed her arms and broke up the fight. They held Bottle back and prevented the fight from getting worse.

"FUCK ALL OF YOU GUYS! YOU'RE JUST A BUNCH OF LOSERS!" Bottle screamed.

"FUCK OFF! Bottle tried to push Lightning and Tree off of her.

I didn't care. I lunged at her and tried to land another shot, but Pillow got between us and pushed me back with all her strength.

"YOU'RE JUST A BUNCH OF LOSERS AND YOU'LL GET YOURSELVES KILLED TRYING TO BEAT SOME ENTITY!"

I tried to punch Bottle again, but Pillow was too strong. I tried to overpower Pillow, but Remote jumped between us.

"STOP!" Remote yelled at the top of her lungs.

Bottle and I calmed down and everyone listened to Remote.

"This is exactly what this thing wants. It wants to divide us so it can pick us off one by one. We were together when we were able to injure it. That's why we're still alive!" Remote asserted.

"Yeah? Well, I plan to keep it that way," Bottle angrily said.

Bottle walked by me and bumped my shoulder and went back over to the graveyard. Pillow actually brought her bike along with her on the back of her motorcycle. Bottle got on her bike and started riding away.

The rest followed Bottle. Tree and Pillow both unclipped their bikes and started to leave too without saying a word. Lightning started to follow them.

"Lightning..." I uttered.

"Guys..." Lightning paused for a long time. "I can't do this. My grandfather was right. I'll always be an outcast from society. Looks like it would be better to stay that way."

Lightning followed the group and mounted his bike. Everyone drove separate ways without uttering a word to each other.

Remote and I watched as everyone left the scene, all parting separate ways. We didn't say a word to each other. We just watched the others leave and occasionally looked at each other.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: NARRATOR

For the next six weeks, the friends would stop talking to each other. They all blocked each other on social media and refused to talk with each other after the altercation that day. The only people who would interact would be Pen and Tree, who lived together. It was apparent that in their house, the atmosphere was off ever since the day of the altercation.

Pillow started to pack her things and move out of the city to live on her own and start a life.

Pen and Tree lived together, but the atmosphere in the house was far quieter.

Bottle became very depressed and started to barely leave the house. She would only leave to go to the arcade herself or if she absolutely had to.

Lightning kept going to summer school so he could get a degree and move away.

Remote dropped out of summer school and started gaming inside all day, much to the dislike of her mother.

All Liy could do was stare up at the ceiling, wondering where she went wrong.

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This chapter was by far the most fun chapter to write haha. Thank you guys so much for all the support. The chapters will only get better and better from here. Thanks for reading, and have a damn good day/night! :)

Chapter 29: Publishing 12/12/23

Chapter 29 - Trophy

WARNING: VERY GRAPHIC SCENES

AUGUST

"Check this shit out!" I told my friends as I raised my gun to the glass bottle. I aimed the pistol straight at the target and pressed the trigger. The bottle exploded instantly when I pressed the trigger.

"Fuck yeah!!" Knife eagerly smiled.

"That was a good one," Yin-yang congratulated.

Summer was almost over. Only two weeks to go. It was safe to say, this summer was fucking awesome. The whole summer, I would walk around town with Knife and Yang. We would mug some people and occasionally bully some of the kids who would go to the local summer school. Life was great. I was still pissed that I lost my knife, but Yang let me borrow his for the summer.

"Grab the next target," I smiled.

Knife went to grab another one of my dad's empty beer bottles. He set it on the wooden table outside in our backyard.

"Yang, why don't you have a shot?" I asked.

"Nah, I'm not good with guns, Trophy. I'll sit and watch you and Knife shoot though!"

"Alright then, stupid baby," I rolled my eyes playfully.

I tossed the pistol to Knife, who caught it with one hand. He tried to shoot the bottle, but he barely missed it by mere inches.

"Damn!"

I smirked and he handed the gun to me. I raised the gun to the bottle and shot it perfectly. The bottle exploded on impact, leaving shards of glass all over the backyard.

"Hell yeah, Trophy!" Knife cheered.

"Yeah!!" Yang cheered me on.

"Go grab me the next target," I smiled, pointing to Lightning's cat.

Knife stared at me for a moment like I was crazy. I glared back at him. He shrugged his shoulders and went to grab Lightning's cat. He jumped on the feline and grabbed it with both hands. He held the cat in place on top of the wooden table.

"Just hold that shit in place. I'm going for a kill shot," I smirked.

Knife held the cat in place as I lined the barrel of the gun up to the cat's head. I was about to pull the trigger until I heard the sound of keys jingling behind me.

"What the hell are you boys doing?" My dad authoritatively stated.

I lowered the gun and faced him.

"Just cleaning your gun out, like you asked me to," My voice shook.

"You're cleaning my gun huh?" My dad got more mad. He lowered himself to come face-to-face with me.

"Da-" I was cut off.

"LIES!" He shouted in my face.

I looked at the ground as my dad snatched his gun back. Knife and Yang watched as my dad yelled at me. He started to walk away with his gun, but he turned around. He pointed his gun at me and shot the floor around me. The gunshots echoed throughout the neighborhood and our grass started to kick up from the impact. One of the bullets shot my foot, causing my shoe to break in half.

I put my face in my hands as I started to shake and cry a bit out of

fear.

"Look at him now, boys," My dad eerily smiled at Knife and Yang. "Your friend isn't the tough guy he claims to be."

I continued to shiver with my face in my hands as I heard my friends walk up to me.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PEN

My cast was starting to itch. It had been six weeks since any of our friends had talked to each other. I didn't know much about the altercation, but Tree told me that it changed the friendship forever.

I walked down to the local pharmacy and went to get some medicine to treat my itchy cast. The person working there didn't seem very fond of me. She glared at me like she knew who I was.

"Hello, I would like to pick up my prescription!" I fakely smiled.

"Your name?" The lady at the counter raised an eyebrow.

"Pen."

"Aha, I see you. I'll get your medicine right now," The lady walked to the back of the store.

I patiently waited by the front register for her to bring my medicine. While I was waiting, I noticed Fanny waiting in the waiting room for something.

"Hey, loser," Fanny smirked. "Nice broken arm ya got there."

"Ugh, what do you want," I rolled my eyes, clearly not in the mood.

"I wanted to sign your cast," Fanny smiled.

"Sure?" I questioned.

Fanny took a black pen out of her pocket. She walked over to me and signed my cast. She wrote the word, "LOSER", in big, bold letters with a pen.

"Bye, dumbass!" Fanny laughed. I knew she hated Tree and me, but why was she so mean towards me in particular? I never did anything to her.

"Here's your medicine! Sorry, it took so long," The pharmacist apologized.

"Oh, no! It's okay!" I smiled and left the store.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TROPHY

"You okay, Trophy?" Yang asked me with concern. I didn't answer back. My dad was a retired war veteran, meaning some of his ways of parenting were rather traumatizing. I huddled myself next to the hood of my dad's car. I stared at the empty street, expressionless. Knife and Yang watched me with concern.

I kept staring at the road until I saw a peculiar package on an RC car. The car drove its way over to my mailbox and left itself there. I saw the package and walked over to open it. Knife and Yang didn't say a word. They just watched me as I walked over to retrieve the package.

The package on the car was wrapped in crude brown paper. I unwrapped the box and saw another box underneath. This one was red and sealed with a bow. I untied the bow and opened the box. My hands started to tremble once I saw the contents of the box. Inside the box was my knife. My initials were etched on the handle and there lay a paper on the side of the knife. I unwrapped the paper and read the message.

KILL HIM

I was shocked. Someone found my knife and somehow found my address too. I picked up the knife and walked over to the front door of my house. Since my dad loved alcohol and would fall asleep, I knew the front door was unlocked. I creaked open the door and saw my dad sleeping on the couch.

Once I stepped through the front door, my dad's radio turned on. I heard it say a peculiar message.

Hi, Trophy. I know that a talking radio isn't possible in any world,

but it's happening right now. You have the knife on you. I think you know what I want you to do. Kill him. Kill him. KILL HIM! KILL HIM!!!.

My hands shook as I walked over to my sleeping dad. The radio kept chanting one phrase. To kill my dad. I raised the knife to his neck and slit his throat. He woke up and grabbed my arm, but I was far stronger than him. To make sure he died, I continued to stab him in the side of the neck. My dad soon died on the couch.

The radio went to static and said a new message.

Good job, Trophy! You did the right thing! I am so proud of you! Now, do that with more people. Kill them all. Kill them all. KILL THEM ALL!

The last phrase on the radio was a deranged man telling me to kill everyone. I don't know why, but the feeling of killing the person who traumatized me for my entire life felt good. Too good.

I walked outside. My clothes were stained with blood. I snuck around the back and changed into a new shirt. I walked back out to meet my friends.

"Hey, Trophy, why are you smiling? You were crying just a moment ago," Yang commented.

"Don't worry about it. Let's go see the new movie. I got some money from my dad's wallet," I smiled.

"Fair enough. I heard the new slasher is SICK!" Knife smiled with glee.

"True. Let's get going," I commented.

My friends and I stole my dad's car. We drove around town for a bit until we made it to the theater.

We arrived at the movie theater and went up to the front desk to purchase some tickets. I took my dad's money out of my pocket and saw that we were a few dollars short of three tickets.

"I can wait outside. You two can go see it yourselves," Yang offered.

"Hell no, Yang, I'm not gonna let a couple of dollars stop all of us from seeing this shit," I frowned.

I pondered for a while until I got an idea of what to do.

"Guys, let's walk over to the local summer school, shall we?" I smirked.

"I know what you're thinking. I'm game," Knife smiled.

"I mean, sure, I can't pass up something like this," Yang shrugged.

We decided to leave our car in the parking lot and walk over to the school ourselves. It was only a couple of minutes away after all.

As we all walked over to the school, the same phrase kept on echoing in my mind. ***"Kill them all"***. I shuddered at my thoughts and tried to ignore them, but my mind was starting to take control of me.

"Trophy, you good?" Knife asked, confused.

"Yeah dude, I'm fine," I smiled at him, shrugging it off.

"This seems like a nice spot to rest," Yang pointed to a shady spot.

"Agreed, let's wait for someone to pass and mug their asses."

It wasn't long until the dismissal bell rang and the kids flocked out. Because we would be easily seen by others, we liked to wait it out for some of the lonely kids to walk by. I smiled with glee as I saw Golf Ball inside the classroom with her best friend, Tennis Ball. All three of us knew that they would be good targets to rob. They weren't experienced at fighting, but they were rich, so we decided to wait for them.

We didn't have to wait for long for the two to start walking by. I lit a cigarette and stared them down.

"Want a hit?" I asked Knife and Yang. They both said yes and I lit them some cigarettes.

The two balls walked by the shady spot.

"Where you two headed?" Knife asked with a smile.

"It's none of your business, Knife," Tennis Ball frowned.

"Geez, someone's grumpy," Knife rolled his eyes.

"Hey, fellas," I smirked. I brandished my knife in my pocket so they couldn't see.

"Greetings, Trophy?" Golf ball questioned.

"YANG! NOW!"

Yang smirked and tackled Golf Ball to the floor. She hit the dirt with a thud. Knife helped hold her down with his leg. Yang held her arms and I started walking over. Just then, Tennis Ball charged into Knife, sending him tumbling onto the floor. Yang continued to hold Golf Ball down. Tennis Ball tried to ram Yang next, but Knife wasn't having it. He punched Tennis Ball in the chin, causing him to wince in pain.

Tennis Ball was a strong dude. He took the punch like a champ and continued to beat the shit out of Knife. I just stood and watched as my friends were struggling against them. I got an idea. While Tennis Ball was holding Knife on the ground, I went around behind him. Raising my knife in my hand, I was ready to stab.

"KNIFE! YOU MESSED WITH THE WRONG PEOPLE," Tennis Ball yelled.

"No, Tennis Ball! I'm sorry!" Knife tried to apologize.

"Sorry's not gonna cut i-" Tennis Ball suddenly froze.

I stabbed him in the back with my knife. I pulled the knife out and slit his throat. Blood gushed out of his throat and soaked Knife with blood. Tennis Ball stopped holding Knife down and turned his attention towards me. I kicked him over. He was on his back now.

"Next time, don't beat my friends up," I smirked.

"Have a great time in hell," Tennis Ball smirked.

I stabbed him one last time. This time in the chest. He finally collapsed to the floor, dead. I walked over to Golf Ball, who was still being held down by Yang.

"Yang, let her go. I'll take care of her from here."

Yang nodded and let me put my foot on her abdomen, keeping her on the dirt.

"Tilt your head to the left a bit," I smirked.

Golf Ball tilted her head. She saw her friend, dead. His throat was slit and he was bleeding out on the ground. She was in shock. All she could do was cry.

"Now, if you don't want to end up like your fatass friend, I suggest you hand me your wallet," I smirked once again.

"OKAY! JUST TAKE IT!" She reached into her left pocket and pulled her wallet out. She handed it to me while crying her eyes out.

"Wise choice. Now, can you stop crying? You're hurting my ears," I rolled my eyes.

I freed Golf Ball. She ran away from us as fast as she could back to her bike.

"Bye! Have a nice day! Au revoir!" I started to laugh.

Knife and Yang got up and smiled at me. I wiped the blood off of Knife with one of the dollar bills from Golf Ball's wallet.

"Thanks."

We walked back over to the theater with money in hand. This walk, I didn't have that dreaded phrase repeating in my head. I talked with my friends, who high-fived me after we secured some money. Golf Ball had more than we thought. Two hundred and fifty dollars to be exact.

We walked back inside the theater and paid for our tickets.

"Where did you get the money?" The receptionist asked politely.

"Oh, my dad lent us some to go out and have fun," I smiled.

"I see. Here ya go!" The clerk handed us our tickets.

"Thank you, ma'am."

We walked over to the concession stand to buy some food. I bought us all a giant box of popcorn and a package of drinks. We walked and found our seats in our cinema. Some people are idiots. The best seats in the theater weren't booked, while the back row was. I laughed at this, so we took some of the best seats.

The movie was rather good. Although it was a horror movie, none of us got scared. Yang jumped at a scene, but that was all. We kept talking during the movie, much to the complaints of others, but we didn't care. If anyone complained to us, I would flip them off and keep watching. It was good.

(Timeskip to after the movie)

"THAT WAS AWESOME!" Knife cheered.

"TRUE! THE KILL PARTS WERE SO DAMN DETAILED!" Yang smiled back.

"I knew this was an excellent idea," I grinned.

Knife and Yang high-fived me in delight. We laughed with each other until Knife pointed something out.

"Guys, look! There's Lightning!"

"Oh yeah, I forgot that fuckface stays late for tutoring," I smirked and let out a chuckle.

"Trophy. I know what you're thinking. Shouldn't we take a break from Lightning? We've been bullying him all summer. I'm starting to feel a bit bad," Yang slightly frowned.

"Yang, can I tell you something?" I pulled him in closer.

"Wha-"

"SHUT THE FUCK UP!" I screamed in his face.

My yelling alerted Lightning. He saw us and started running.

"THERE HE IS! GO GO!" I motioned to my friends.

Despite being yelled at by me, Yang agreed and helped Knife and I chase Lightning. I hated that kid ever since he moved here. To be fair, I had a hate for everyone if their names weren't Knife or Yang. I had a burning hate for Lightning ever since I saw him. He's just so annoying. He always rides his skateboard everywhere and he gets on my nerves for some reason.

We got inside our car and started to drive after Lightning. We caught up to him and ran him over with our car. He ended up falling to the ground in pain. Although he didn't break anything, he was still too weak to walk. We all got out of the car and confronted him.

"Knife," I smiled.

Knife put his boot on Lightning's ankle, rendering him unable to move.

"You know, you're a real bitch sometimes, Lightning," I smirked at him.

"For what? What the fuck did I ever do to you? You've always hated me ever since I moved here!" He lashed out.

"I hate everyone. Especially bitches going by the name Lightning," I smiled an evil smile. "Now, you're gonna see your sister."

I raised the knife to his head. I quickly went to stab him, but I felt my hand get resisted by something.

"NO!" I heard a voice in front of me.

I looked down to see my knife through Yang's arm. His arm started to

bleed all over Lightning.

"WHAT THE FUCK YANG!" I shouted.

"You're not gonna kill him, Trophy. Look at you. First, you killed your dad, then you killed Tennis Ball, and now you're trying to kill your next-door neighbor. Do you see what you're doing? I'm all for the bullying, mugging, and injuring what-not, but I'm not gonna let you kill more people. You're going to go to jail if you don't stop," Yang started to tear up.

I pulled the knife out of his arm and looked at myself. What was I thinking? I pulled the knife back and looked at my hands, which were covered in Yang's blood.

"Yang..." I uttered.

"Yes, Trophy?" Yang lightly smiled.

"Fuck you," I lifted the knife and tried to stab Yang. My swing missing him by only a bit. I started to laugh as I chased Yang down the block. Knife followed after and Lightning just lay there.

I caught up to Yang and threw him against a wall.

"Yang. Now you know not to mess with me, right?" I started to laugh.

"YES TROPHY! DON'T KILL ME!" Yang screamed.

"Shut up," I exclaimed, deadpan.

I raised the knife and was about to deliver the killing blow when someone saw me.

"Hey, kid! What the hell are you trying to do to him?" An adult spotted me.

"Nothing. We're just play-fighting," I fake-laughed. I helped Yang up and looked at him.

I snapped out of my trance shortly after.

"Yang. I'm sorry. I can't believe I was about to kill you," I apologized.

"It's all good, Trophy. It happens to the best of us," Yang smiled back. I was lucky that Yang was so understanding, as he came from a corrupted home. I drove home with my friends, laughing along with them. I watched as Lightning limped home. I was still determined to kill the young prick, but I was too exhausted from today and decided to just go home.

"Bye!" I waved to my friends as I walked inside the house.

I got back to my house and saw my dad was still dead on the sofa. I smiled at his body and walked upstairs, determined to do what I wanted.

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Oh man, what a hell of a chapter haha. We're finally getting the background of Trophy and his gang! This chapter was also rather fun to type, as I'm starting to get more motivation to write lolol. Thanks for reading, and have a damn good day/night! ;)

Chapter 30: Publishing 12/14/23

Chapter 30 - Remote

WARNING: SLIGHTLY GRAPHIC SCENES

Ugh... another day. I don't know what happened, but I went from loving summer to hating it. No one reached out to me anymore. No one texted me anymore. Not even Liy reached out to me. It had been six weeks. What was she doing? I pondered to myself as I booted up my Nintendo. I wish life would go back to normal.

Today was grocery day. My mom put a grocery list on the table since she was gone for work. There were so many things on the list. I opened the list, and the end fell to the floor. Did I have to get all this stuff? Heck, I had nothing else to do, so I shrugged it off and went shopping.

The car in the parking lot started. I had gotten my license about a couple of weeks prior, and I wanted to use the license to its full potential. I drove down the freeway and listened to my favorite songs. For some strange reason, it was cold. It's abnormal for the temperature to be frigid when it is the middle of August. Despite the drive, I couldn't stop thinking about Liy.

The shops were crowded today, as it was a Monday. People usually like shopping on a Monday for some odd reason. I never got why, but I never questioned it. The store was the usual, enormous grocery store I had grown up around. I had brought a pen with me to the store so I could cross off items I could buy.

I shopped around. When I was about halfway down the list, I saw someone familiar. I stared into the distance and noticed it was an old friend from school.

"Hey, TV!" I waved.

"Hello, Remote," TV stated deadpan.

Although TV was usually expressionless, he had a soft spot for people like him. One of those people was me. TV was a chill dude. He wouldn't talk to others much, but if you got to know him, you wouldn't regret it.

"You seem down. Mind telling me the error?" TV asked, slightly concerned.

How did he know that I was down? Could he read my mind or something?

"How'd you know?" I stared up at him.

"I have my ways, Remote," TV said, deadpan.

"Fine. You caught me. It's just that my friends stopped talking to me for the past six weeks of summer."

"I see, did you try texting them?"

"They blocked me," I frowned.

"Oh. Well, they must have a reason to block you," TV spoke, expressionless.

"They do, trust me."

We continued to chat while I shopped. Surprisingly, TV walked with me the entire time I was shopping. He told me about his summer and I told him about mine. I decided to tell him about the altercation my friends and I had prior. Unsurprisingly, he wasn't too fazed by the entire thing, being a mechanical mind. The shopping was over sooner than I had imagined.

I went over to the front desk to pay for the food.

"Okay, you're all set. Your total is 420 dollars," The cashier smiled.

My mom had lent me her credit card for the shopping. I paid for it and left the shop. Since I was leaving, I had to wave TV goodbye.

"Remote, we should hang out sometime over the summer. I know

there's only a couple of weeks left, but we should arrange a time," TV smiled.

"Sure! I'd love to hang out," I smiled back.

We waved each other goodbye as I drove back home.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: THE ENTITY

This job was almost too easy. These high-schoolers made the worst decision of their lives digging my grave up. They were too stupid to follow simple rules, therefore they must now pay the price.

I walked around the sewers for a short while. The sewers were relaxing. No one to bother me. No one to see me. The children were foolish enough to split up. Out of all of them, there was one in particular that stood out to me. I don't know her name, but she was the one to stab me in the eye. It didn't hurt, but it made me look the fool.

According to her friends' text messages, her name was Remote. She's the only one with her head on straight, knowing the consequences of splitting up. Unlucky for her, her friends have already caused her death.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: REMOTE

I got home to the smell of burning. Fearing the worst, I dashed inside the house, wondering what had happened. The smell was coming from the kitchen. I grabbed a fire extinguisher and walked into the kitchen. The oven had caught on fire. I doused the fire with the extinguisher. Shit. My mom was going to kill me if she found out that the oven was fucked. I didn't do anything, which was rather weird. I set the fire extinguisher on the ground and went back up to my room.

I queued into another game of Smash Bros. My thumbs hurt from playing, but I was destroying everyone in the game, so I couldn't stop. Once I started another game, I smelled burning again. Panicked, I rushed downstairs to see another fire. This time, there was a roaring flame on the stove. Since I had recently used the fire extinguisher, the extinguisher was still in the room, meaning that putting the flame out

was rather easy.

Sweating, I set the extinguisher back down. "What was happening?" I thought to myself. I turned around and decided to go back up to my room when suddenly, I peeked up the stairs to see the entity standing at the top of the stairs.

I started to run, but the monster stretched its arm out and grabbed me by the ankle. Its snake-like arm coiled itself around me, constricting me. The entity's arm soon slivered its way up all around my body. The entity pulled me in and smiled. I couldn't escape the entity's powerful grasp. I tried to break free, but the grip was too tight.

"Well, this is great!" The entity laughed. Its red eyes shone in the blinding lights coming from the windows. It smiled at me with an evil grin.

Before I could react, the entity opened a portal in the middle of my house. It walked through the portal, taking me with it.

(Timeskip a couple of hours)

I woke up in a dark area. I couldn't see anything, and I couldn't recall what had happened prior. I looked around and soon realized I was in the sewers. I started to walk around, looking for a way out. Suddenly, I felt a spongy substance under my foot. I looked down and saw Mic's corpse. She had been impaled through the stomach and bled out from her injuries.

I continued to walk through the sewers. The smell made me want to gag. I kept wandering for about ten more minutes. That's when I found a small beam of light hit the walls of the sewer. Excited, I rushed towards it, begging for this nightmare to be over.

To my dismay, I noticed the light was a fake. Good news, it was a flashlight. Bad news, I was still trapped down here. Things got worse when I heard some music behind me. The hair on the back of my neck stood up as I slowly turned around. I saw the same entity, but this time, it was wearing a suit and tie. It carried a cane and wore a top hat. It shuffled over to me elegantly. I was too scared to move. It

wasn't until it was too late that I decided to move. The entity pounced on me and took hold of me with both hands.

The entity clutched me by the throat and laughed in my face. I struggled and kicked at the entity, but it seemed unfazed by my struggles.

"I'm not scared of you," I solemnly stated.

This seemed to make the entity upset. It frowned and pulled me in closer, making scary expressions as it tried to scare me. The entity morphed into exactly what I was afraid of. I saw its face melt before my eyes. The entity melted like a candle and transformed into a fish monster. How did it know I was scared of the ocean? Despite this, I still wasn't fazed and I kept staring at the monster, deadpan.

"You will be down here forever," The monster smirked.

The monster's eyes turned a bright orange. I felt my body go limp as I stepped into a trance. The entity's eyes had some kind of effect on me. I felt like I was in a deep sleep, but I was still conscious of whatever was around me. Despite being motionless, I could hear the entity laugh and laugh as I started to float into the sky.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: LIY

I stared up at the ceiling of my apartment. Nothing to do, once again. I groaned and checked my phone for any updates. As usual, people were going missing. I rolled my eyes and thought of what to do. That's when I got a radical idea. It had been six-ish weeks since I had visited Remote. I bet she hated me for not paying attention to her. Gosh, why was I such a bad friend? I had lost all my friends except Remote, and I bet she hated me now too. My life was virtually over when it came to socializing.

I changed into my most comfortable clothes and set off to Remote's house. I mounted my bike and started to ride over. On the way, I met some familiar faces.

"Hey, Liy! Long time no see!" Saw waved. She and Gaty were what I assume going to the library again.

"Oh, Hello, Saw!" I fake-smiled.

Gaty smiled back and asked where I was headed. I responded with the park, which was a lie. Saw elbowed Gaty, as she thought Gaty was being too nosey. Gaty kicked Saw, causing her to wince.

"Well, have fun!" Gaty ignored Saw and waved.

"You too!"

I kept on riding my bike, unsure of what Remote would think of me.

I arrived at Remote's house. I rang the doorbell, hoping she would answer. I waited by the door for about five minutes. No answer. I looked through the window and saw that no one was in the house. Huh, I guess she wasn't home. I walked away and mounted my bike again. I started riding back to my apartment.

While I was riding back, a part of me worried about Remote. A part of me told me that I should go back and that there was something wrong with Remote. I listened to this part of my mind and decided to turn back to Remote's house when I was halfway back to my apartment.

I arrived back at Remote's house. This time, I looked through a different window. I was in shock to see burnt ashes all over her kitchen floor. Fearing the worst, I kicked the door down and ran inside. I arrived in the kitchen and saw a message written on the kitchen floor with ashes.

YOU'LL DIE IF YOU TRY TO STOP ME

Horrified, I knew something happened to Remote. The entity must have taken her. There was only one way to get Remote back. Challenge the entity. I didn't want to do this, but I would do anything for the one person who cared most about me. Determined to save my closest friend, I clenched my fists and headed back to my apartment on my bike. I *was* going to take this thing down.

I arrived back at my apartment in seven minutes. I searched through my room and grabbed everything I could. I took my backpack, a flashlight, and a bottle of water. It wasn't much, but it was all I had. I

got back on my bike and biked over to the graveyard to settle a score.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TREE

Pen not being at home felt... weird. I missed him dearly. Recently, his mom told Pen he couldn't live with me anymore since she didn't trust me. I hated Pen's mother. She was always super overprotective of Pen. I could tell he was sorry his mother was the way she was, but I couldn't care less. I knew it wasn't Pen's fault, so I didn't give him much grief for it.

To get my mind off of Pen's absence, I had invited Black Hole over to the house to hang out. Surprisingly, his trip to Saturn was short-lived. He claimed it was "boring" and everyone visiting was an "L". I still don't know what that means, but I assumed he didn't like it there much.

I heard a knock at the door. Black Hole had arrived. I opened the door with a large smile.

"Wassup, my dude!" Black Hole smiled and did two finger guns at me.

"Hello!" I happily hugged him. He hugged me back. It was rather weird to hug someone so much taller than me.

"So, how was the last month? Spill the beans," Black Hole urged.

"It could've been better," I laughed.

"Oh? Why?" Black Hole questioned.

I told Black Hole about the friend group parting ways. He smiled and said that we'd be back together eventually.

"Yeah, Death PACT is still going strong!" Black Hole remained optimistic. Black Hole was always smiling. Although it was weird for some, I found it relaxing.

"So, while we're hanging out, wanna go somewhere?" He asked.

"Sure! Where are you thinking?"

"The arcade's got a killer deal," Black Hole eagerly stated.

"Alright, that sounds fun!" I smiled.

Black Hole and I walked out the door and started to drive off.

"Huh, your driving's improved since the last time I've seen you," Black Hole laughed.

"Is that supposed to be a compliment or an insult?"

"Both."

"Goddammit Black Hole."

"Hey, I got a point, right? You haven't taken out a mailbox yet."

"Shut your trap."

We continued to bicker the entire ride. I laughed at all of Black Hole's jokes, and he laughed at all of mine. Our bond was real. The car ride made that more apparent than ever.

We got to the arcade and instantly bought some cards. There was a 50% off sale on game cards, so we both bought 50 dollars worth of credits on our cards.

"Tree."

"Yeah?"

"I've got a challenge for you."

"What's this challenge?"

"If you earn more tickets than me, I'll clean your room tonight. If I win, you gotta do a dare," Black Hole laughed.

"Hm, I'm not sure about that," I pondered out loud.

"What? Are you scared?" Black Hole taunted me.

"No! Fine! It's a deal. I'm gonna win anyways," I smiled.

"Bet."

We both went off and started playing games. I played the game that gave out the most tickets, but I was astounded to see Black Hole hitting jackpot after jackpot behind me. This was gonna be tough.

Although I hit a couple of jackpots of my own, Black Hole was just too good at arcade games. I ended up earning 2,000 tickets, while Black Hole crushed me with 9,070 tickets. He hit so many jackpots, that I lost count.

We went to the prize area and pondered what we would spend our tickets on.

"Hey, Tree!" Black Hole started to laugh.

"What."

"You know the deal! Since I got more tickets than you, you have to do a dare of my choice."

"Ugh, why did I agree to this," I thought out loud.

"Well, I heavily respect you for not chickening out," Black Hole punched my arm.

"Shut upp!" I slapped his arm playfully. "So, what's my dare?"

"Hm. I have a good dare," Black Hole smiled.

"Shit."

"You see that cat costume up there?" Black Hole pointed to a cat costume on the top shelf. "I dare you to get that with your tickets. Once you get it, put it on, go outside, and start meowing at other people," Black Hole burst out into hysterics.

"Hell no," I frowned.

"Hell yes," Black Hole clapped back.

"Fine, but this is only cause I love you," I rolled my eyes.

"I'm so flattered, Tree!"

I bought the cat costume. The arcade worker snickered when she saw me purchasing the costume.

"It's for a dare," I fake laughed.

"I see."

We walked out of the prize area and I put the costume on. I looked like a fool. Black Hole started laughing so hard, that tears formed in his eyes. He pulled his phone out and snapped a quick photo.

"YOU BETTER NOT POST THAT!" I gritted my teeth.

"Nope, I'm not gonna post it. I'll keep this one to myself," Black Hole was still teary-eyed from laughing.

I walked around the block with my cat costume. People around me either stared at me in dismay, or started laughing at me. I felt so embarrassed. Even worse, Black Hole drew attention to me and his laughter attracted the attention of others. God, why would I agree to this?

"I don't hear any meows!" Black Hole smirked.

"Fuck you," I gave him the finger.

"Since when could cats speak English?"

"Ugh... meow."

"That's better."

The fact I had to make cat sounds in public made this more embarrassing. Now, people didn't even try hiding their laughter. My face turned pink and I just looked down in embarrassment.

"Okay, kitty, you can take the costume off," Black Hole laughed.

I quickly changed out of the costume and threw it in the trash

"That was too funny," Black Hole smiled at me.

"No, it wasn't."

"Yeah, it was."

"Shut up."

We continued to walk back to the car. We had only parked a block away.

As we walked the block, I noticed Trophy. He and his gang were walking down the same block, ready to engage in some arcade games. I tried to turn and take the long route, but I didn't want to weird out Black Hole, so I continued walking.

The gang saw me almost instantly. I saw the taller, silver-haired kid whisper in Trophy's ear. They all walked up to Black Hole and me and blocked our path.

"What gives?" Black Hole raised an eyebrow.

"Step aside, big guy, we have business with your friend-"

"Boyfriend," Black Hole corrected.

"Who gives a fuck?" Trophy grimaced.

"Excuse you?" Black Hole smirked.

"Stay out of this. We just wanna talk to your Boyfriend here," The shorter, black-and-white boy smiled.

"I'm suspicious of that," Black Hole frowned.

"You're too fucking difficult," Trophy rolled his eyes.

Trophy walked up to me and lifted me up by the shirt. He stared straight into my eyes and gritted his teeth.

"So, you were the one to cause me to lose my knife?" Trophy snapped.

"The hell? I don't know your knife dude," I rolled my eyes, not fazed. I noticed him holding another knife, with the initials "YY" on the side

of the wooden handle.

He didn't lift me up for long. Black Hole grabbed him by the arm and disarmed the knife out of his hand. He kicked Trophy over and stood over him.

"Next time, don't pick on someone with a 6'7 guy as a boyfriend," Black Hole smirked. "I'd get running if I were you."

This is the first time I have seen Trophy look scared. He looked up at Black Hole with his eyes wide. His lips were trembling with fear.

"C'mon, Trophy, let's get the fuck outta here," The silver-haired boy urgently said.

Trophy pushed him off and tried to kick Black Hole while he was on the ground. Big mistake. He missed him and Black Hole lifted him over his head. He picked him up with gravity and slammed him against the floor.

"Is this guy a fucking wizard?" The black-and-white kid asked.

"No, he's my boyfriend," I rolled my eyes, deadpan.

"Makes sense."

Trophy was on the ground. Black Hole gave him a death stare.

"Listen fuckboy, If I ever see you pull shit like that again, you'll be seeing your dad in hell."

"How the hell did you know-"

"Trust me, kid, I have my ways."

Black Hole picked the golden-haired boy up. He, along with the silver-haired kid started to run away.

"I think that's my alarm to leave," The black-and-white kid smiled.

"I think so too," I slightly smiled back.

He started to walk away, following his friends, who were sprinting

away.

"You okay, babe?" Black Hole asked.

"Yeah, I'm fine."

"Why did they attack you?" Black Hole questioned.

"It's a long story."

"I see. The good thing is that those guys won't be messing with you for a while."

"For sure."

We got in the car and started to drive home.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: LIY

Once I got to the graveyard, I was met with the entity staring at me out the window of the abandoned building. It gave me a death glare. This time, instead of smiling, he was frowning. He made a throat-slash gesture toward me. Knowing that fighting it alone was a bad idea, I decided to leave.

As I was riding away, I had an idea. Remote said that we were able to hurt it when we were together. Because of this, I rode off to go get my friends to help me take this thing down. I figured they'd say no, but it was worth a shot. We were going to save Remote, whether we would be risking our lives or not.

-

Hello hello! I know this is a longer chapter than normal, but I was too inclined to write haha. We've officially hit thirty chapters on the story! The past two months writing this has been so much fun. Thank you so much for reading, and have a damn good day/night! :DD

Chapter 31: Publishing 12/16/23

Chapter 31 - Lightning

WARNING: SENSITIVE TOPICS

This chapter takes place right after Lightning gets home after witnessing Trophy...

My leg still hurt from Trophy crashing into me. I had never understood the reason why Trophy hated me so much. I stared down at my leg and examined the bandages on my leg. Although no serious injury occurred, I knew I would get scars from this.

I walked downstairs and was instantly startled by the sound of rocks hitting the side of my house. I rolled my eyes, thinking it was Trophy's daily dose of annoying me. How would he be back already? I walked over to the tapping sound but saw nothing. Instead, I heard a faint sound of laughter come from outside my house. I stared out the window to see if I could see anything, but I couldn't see anything, yet I could still hear the laughter.

What I did notice was a paper on the ground next to my side gate. I paced down the stairs and went to the kitchen. I was suspicious that this was a trap, so I grabbed a kitchen knife from the drawer and cautiously walked outside. I ran outside and brought the paper inside the house as fast as I could. The paper was... a note?

Behind you :)

I urgently spun around behind me, but I saw nothing. This was just a prank. I laughed to myself and threw the note in the garbage. I continued with my day and started scrolling on my phone for a couple of hours.

10:00 PM

I scrolled on my phone for some time until I saw a headline that

caught my attention.

NEWS: 5 KILLED IN GOIKY MALL SHOOTING

I read the article, which was posted two days ago, and got sucked into the reading. I felt myself feel more and more scared as I kept reading, but something was preventing me from stopping. I got even more freaked out when I saw the shooter's mugshot. The shooter looked like the same one I had seen the night my sister had died. I read the name. It was the same guy, but this time, he had gotten caught.

The next paragraph read that the man had broken out of jail only a day after his sentencing.

My body shook with fear as I realized that the person who had killed my sister was still alive, and roaming the streets of Goiky. I put the phone down and tried to calm myself down.

That's when I heard a voice come from the top of my stairs. The sky was now dark, so I felt slightly more unsafe. Despite my feelings, I still went up the stairs to investigate. I reached the first step and saw a dollar bill. Distracted, I picked it up and continued walking up the stairs. As I continued walking up the stairs, I kept finding a dollar bill on each step. I reached the top of the stairs without realizing it.

On the last step, there was another note. I realized that it was the same note that I had thrown in the trash a couple of hours prior. I picked up the note. It read the same dreary message, but this time, it was written in blood and had an extra smiley face next to the one at the end.

I turned around and saw the shooter at the bottom of the steps. He stared me down with a devilish grin and put his hands behind his back. He made a gesture with one of his hands.

"Come here."

I ran up the stairs and cornered myself in my room. Was this real? There was no way this was real. How did the shooter know that my family had moved houses? How would he know that I was home

alone? Why was he coming for me? Questions flooded my mind, but my adrenaline kicked in. I barricaded my bedroom door and took a breather. I heard the shooter walk up the stairs. His boots thumped to the ground. I could hear his heavy breathing and a slight sound of laughter from him.

BANG

A stray bullet flew through my bedroom door. The bullet bounced off the inner wall and fell to the floor. The hot metal burning the wooden floor. I looked back and saw an eyeball peeking through the bullet hole. I then saw the person behind the door wave to me.

The shooter started to laugh and taunt me. I had an idea. It was my only option. I tried to open my bedroom window, but my window was stuck in place. I tried to force the window open, but the window got stuck on something in the sliding mechanics. I was stuck.

The shooter shot another bullet. This time, the bullet broke the lock of my door, meaning the shooter could've opened it if I hadn't barricaded the door. I heard him pull something out of his pocket. Now, he started to break down the door with something.

"Where the fuck did he get a hatchet from?" I thought to myself.

The door cracked open. The shooter looked through the door and grinned at me.

"Nice to see you again, Lightning!"

I froze in fear as the man stuck his hand through the crack of the door to try to push the barricade out of the way. Acting quickly, I broke off the end of my bedroom lamp and stabbed the shooter in the hand. I pinned his hand to the door with the broken ceramic. The shooter wailed in pain and tried to remove his hand.

I took advantage of this opportunity and tried to force the window open yet again.

"CMON CMON CMON!!" I urgently said out loud.

The window still wouldn't budge. The shooter removed his hand.

Now, he wasn't playing games. He was almost through the barricade. I thought that this was it. I would die in the same way as my sister. There was only one more thing that I would try. I was scared at first, but I built up the courage to break the window and jump out.

Using the broken lamp, I was able to shatter the window. I crawled out of the small opening and escaped just as the shooter barged into my room. I climbed onto the front of my house. I jumped down two stories and ran into the streets, shouting for help.

I decided to run over to my other neighbor's house. Luckily, she was rather nice. I got to her house and frantically knocked on the door.

"Why, hello, Lightni-" I ran right through her, almost knocking her over.

"Basketball, it's an emergency."

"What are you doing here all of a sudden? It's been years since we've talked."

"No time to explain. Where's your phone?"

"Kitchen."

I ran to the kitchen and picked up her home phone. As I dialed 911, I saw the shooter walk up to the front of the house. Oh shit.

I ran downstairs to tell Basketball not to open it. I saw her hand reach for the knob.

"BASKETBALL, NO!" I yelled.

My sudden voice was enough to scare Basketball. She let go of the knob and looked at me.

"What are you talking about?" My package has arrived."

"The hell you mean, package?"

Basketball opened the door and brought a cardboard box inside. She brought it inside and placed it on the kitchen counter. What was

happening? I had just seen the shooter at her doorstep. That's when I caught a glimpse of realization. That was the entity. There was no shooter. It was the entity disguised as the shooter.

"Hey, Basketball?"

"Yeah?"

"Can I stay the night here? I was being followed when I came inside your house."

"Sure, Lightning."

Basketball smiled at me and reassured me that I would be safe at her house.

I sat on her couch, contemplating the fact that I had almost died. It was a lot to take in, but I've gone through enough trauma to be used to situations like that.

Eventually, I decided to leave the house and go back to my house. Despite what had just happened, I wasn't scared at all. Basketball was worried that I would get hurt, but I assured her that I would be alright. I smiled and waved her goodbye. Before leaving, she gave me her number and I left with a chip on my shoulder.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TREE

I didn't expect Black Hole to overstay his welcome. Although I loved him, I had always thought that I was too low for his standards. I smiled as I watched Black Hole sleep on the couch. Although he wasn't a snorer, he was a sleep-talker. I silently snickered as I heard him talk in his sleep.

"Stop tryna rizz me up cuhhh."

"Nah fam yall trippin on god dawg. I said I didn't want you guys bruhhh."

"I'm already with Tree ya damn idiots."

I still didn't know what half those words meant. I would ask Black

Hole about these later, but I was afraid he'd think I was dumb for not knowing. I believed that he was saying these things since he had recently gone out to a party. Black Hole was easy to love. His tall frame and his handsome appearance could make anyone fall for him. I was lucky to be the one to be with him for what I think to be my entire life.

Black Hole woke up about a couple of minutes later. His messy hair covered his eyes. I swept it out of his face as he hugged me when he woke up.

"Damn, Tree, you love me, don't ya," Black Hole grinned.

"Yeah, I do," I admitted.

"Okay, shortie."

"Shut up."

Black Hole chuckled as he slowly woke up. I kissed him on the cheek, which he laughed at. Since I had let him sleep here the previous night, I had asked Pen if Black Hole could use his bed. Pen agreed to let Black Hole sleep a couple of nights. However, he had a weird rule. Don't go on his computer.

Black Hole paced up the stairs. He found Pen's room, despite the lights being off.

"How can you see in the dark so well?" I questioned.

"I'm simply just better."

"Actually, what's the reason?"

"I told you. I'm just better at the game."

"What game?"

"Never mind."

"Goodnight, Black Hole."

"Goodnight, Tree."

I watched Black Hole walk inside Pen's room and shut the door. I decided to fall asleep that night too. I got ready for bed and drifted off to sleep.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: LIGHTNING

I woke up the next morning in a cold sweat. I didn't remember much from yesterday, but I remembered enough to have a couple of nightmares about it. My mom was out working, but my dad decided to stay home today since he felt bad about leaving me at home so often. Although I had reassured him that it was okay, he still followed through.

"Morning, sleepyhead!" My dad slowly creaked open the door and woke me up.

"Morning, Dad," I quietly said, still waking up from my rest.

"How'd ya sleep?" He asked while sitting on the side of my bed.

"Fine."

"That's good. I'll leave you be for a while. I remember when I was your age, I hated my parents at times." My dad laughed. He knew me so well it was scary.

I scrolled on my phone and found out that an old friend had texted. I checked the name. It was... Marker?

Private DMs:

Marker: Hallo Lighty! Long time no talk. How are you?

Lightning: I'm good dude. It's been a while since you've texted. Why?

Marker: Well, over the summer, I was being an idiot and I dropped my phone off a bridge.

Lightning: You idiot, Marker.

Marker: Hey! I'm not that dumb!

Lightning: LOL

Marker: Anyway, wanna hang out?

Lightning: Sure! Is anyone else going to be there?

Marker: Is it okay if Foldy and Stapy are there too?

Lightning: I don't see why not.

Marker: Bet G. See ya then bud

Lightning: The switch-up is WILD

I smiled as I put the phone down. I got changed and instantly went downstairs, feeling happier that an old friend remembered me and wanted to hang out. However, I wasn't sure how Foldy and Stapy would react to me being there, as they aren't as gullible as Marker.

My dad prepared breakfast and I ate with him. He talked about usual dad things. The latest football game, some stories with co-workers, everything. Although it was boring, I was happy that my dad was so cool. Even my friends would say he was back in the day.

I mounted my bike and set off to Marker's house. He had texted me the address prior.

I met at Marker's house. He welcomed me in with a smile. I smiled back and saw Foldy and Stapy on the couch together. I assumed they were in a relationship by the way they were staring at each other.

"Hey, Lightning!" Foldy smiled.

"Hello!"

Stapy looked at me. I knew he wasn't fond of many people, so I just waved back to him awkwardly.

"Stapy, it's rude to not greet people." Foldy rolled her eyes at Stapy and punched him.

"Shit, my bad, wassup, Lightning."

"Hey Stapy."

The four of us decided to play some uno. Stapy talked it up, saying that he'd win like always.

The game was getting heated. Marker and I decided to gang up on Stapy. Stapy was a desk smasher. Whenever we would play against him, he would slam the table. He would also swear at Marker. It was clear that Stapy was rather competitive. Foldy just laughed at him and kept quiet most of the time.

It got down to the wire. Stapy and I both had one card. Marker had three, and Foldy had five. Foldy reversed the direction so that Stapy would play into Marker. Stapy sighed as he drew another card. Marker smirked and placed a +4 on the table.

"Draw four, Lighty."

"Why do you call me Lighty?" I asked.

"Why not."

I shrugged and angrily took four cards. Foldy played and put a +2 on Stapy. Stapy clenched his fist and glared at Foldy as he took two cards from the stack. Marker proceeded to play smart and beat everyone.

"Good game, guys!" Marker smiled.

"Good game," I shrugged.

"Well played," Foldy smiled.

"You got so damn lucky," Stapy rolled his eyes.

"Nope. It's called skill!" Marker smiled and wagged his finger at Stapy.

"Grr!"

We continued to hang out and we played a couple more games before we decided to go get some ice cream at the local shops. Marker wasn't the best driver, and the music he played was rather... weird to say the least. I put my earbuds in and Stapy kept telling him to change the song, but Marker refused. Foldy and I sat in the back seat and we laughed at each other as the two argued up front.

We eventually got to the window. It was none other than Woody working there. He was delighted to see me and he waved to me. Woody was so cheerful, that even Stapy smiled.

"Wassup, Woods, can we get two double-scoops of mint chocolate chip, a scoop of cotton candy, and a triple-scoop of Dutch chocolate, cookies and creme, and vanilla?" Stapy smiled.

"Coming right up! That'll be 17.99 at the next window." Woody grinned. "Have a good one, you guys!"

"You too dude!" Stapy did a finger gun at him.

"Stapy, why'd you order such a big ice cream?" Foldy asked.

"I'm hungry."

"Can't argue with that," Foldy laughed.

Stapy blushed. Marker raised an eyebrow at him and smirked.

"Shut up, Marker," Stapy silently mouthed.

We all ate our ice cream in the car. It had been a while since I would hang out with friends like this again. The last time I had done this was with Pen and Tree. Who knows what happened to those two after the event?

We got home, and I had to go back home since my dad needed some help with the house. I waved them goodbye and started to pedal home.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: LIY

I had tried everything. I couldn't get a hold of any of my friends. All

of them had blocked my number. Not knowing what to do, I had to ask around for their addresses. I already knew some of their addresses, but I didn't know Lightning's or Pen's.

Contemplating what to do next, I created a flamethrower. I bought a lighter and a can of hairspray. I tested it in my bathroom and it worked like a charm. I also decided to bring some flashlights and some more high-tech medkits. Although my backpack was rather small, I was able to cram all of my necessary items inside the bag.

It was time to end this once and for all.

-

Hello everyone! My finals are coming up, and it's mandatory that I study. However, that doesn't mean I won't continue writing. Thank you guys so much for reading my work. Sometimes, when I'm feeling down, I read some of the comments on chapters to cheer me up after a long study session. Have a damn good day/night you guys, and stay cool! ;)

Chapter 32: Publishing 12/18/23

Chapter 32 - Liy

WARNING: VIOLENT SCENES

Now, I had to find all of my friends and tell them that the entity has Remote. First, I had to figure out where Bottle would be since she doesn't usually go home because of her dad. I checked all of the places I had seen her recently, but I had no luck.

"Hm, maybe I should ask some of her old friends," I pondered.

I knew where one of her old friends, Winner, lived. They had told me their address during high school since they hosted a party or two. I pedaled down to their address to see if they had any information I could use.

I stumbled upon their house. It was rather huge. I knew that they and their friend, Loser, used to live together. As a result, their house would be rather spacious. I rang the doorbell.

"Door's unlocked, come on in," I heard a voice from inside.

I slowly opened the door and saw Winner studying something.

"Oh! Hi, Liy! That rhymes hehe," Winner chuckled.

"Funny. Anyway, I came here to ask you a question," I stared at Winner, deadpan.

"What is it?" Winner curiously asked.

"Well, have you seen Bottle over the summer at all?" I asked.

"Yeah! We hang out a bit. Why?"

"Do you know where she is right now?"

"Yeah, she's at the arcade. She texted me that she loves playing the games there and that she usually goes to relieve stress."

"Got it, thank you so much, Winner," I smiled.

"No problem."

I rushed out of the house and mounted my bike again. I was determined to find Bottle. Sure, she would be pissed off at me for punching her in the face, but it was worth a shot.

I parked my bike and sprinted down the block. I made it to the arcade in no time, bumping into multiple people on the sidewalk as I ran down the street.

The arcade doors swung open. I rushed inside and immediately saw Bottle playing Street Fighter on an arcade machine. She was mashing the buttons with all of her might, and I rushed over to her in the blink of an eye.

"Bottle!"

Bottle didn't look over and continued to play the game.

"What do you want?"

I didn't get time to explain before Bottle started talking again.

"You see that guy I'm hitting? I'm pretending it's you," Bottle angrily spoke.

"It got Remote."

"The fuck are you talking about?" Bottle rolled her eyes and continued to play without even glancing over at me.

"The entity! It got Remote."

Bottle heard this and immediately stopped playing. She turned over to me and stared me in the eyes. Instead of rage, I saw concern. She just stared at me without saying a word.

"Listen, I know you're mad at what I did. I'm sorry, but-"

"Let's hit the road." Bottle cut me off.

Bottle sprinted over to the same place where she parked her bike. I followed in pursuit. We sprinted down the block and unlocked our bikes.

"Where are all the others?" Bottle asked.

"That's what I'm doing right now. We have to gather everyone if we wanna have a chance at taking this thing down for good." I stated.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PEN

I stared at the paper with bags under my eyes. My college application wasn't going very smoothly. I didn't know what to write. Hell, I didn't even know if I would get into college in the first place. My mediocre grades already did a number on my chances.

I kept staring until I heard my phone ring. I saw who it was from. It was from Bottle. I picked up the phone, wondering what in the world she could want at this moment.

"Hello?"

"Pen, it got Remote," Bottle worriedly stated.

"The entity?"

"Yes! Liy told me that Remote is missing and we gotta try to find her. Be outside with your bike in about five minutes. Liy and I will arrive shortly."

"Okay."

"Take care, Pen."

"You too."

I got up and started to walk out the front door to unlock my bike. I was about to leave when my mom walked in front of me with a stern

look on her face.

"Just where do you think you're going?" She asked with a slight frown.

"Out with my friends, why?" I questioned, deadpan.

"Sweetie! You can't go. You're getting over your sickness, remember?" My mother's eyes softened and she stared at me with concern.

"My sickness? What sickness, Mom?" I took my epilepsy pills out of my pocket and showed her the bottle. "You see these? They are fucking useless."

I stared at her with rage and proceeded to smash the pills on the floor. The bottle shattered into a million pieces and the pills flew everywhere, scattering across the wooden floor.

"They're bullshit!" I yelled out in frustration.

My mom stared at the ground in disbelief.

"They help you, Pen. They protect you."

"Protect me? By lying to me since I was born? Trapping me in this hellhole of a house? I'm sorry, but the only people who are and were trying to protect me were my friends. And you made me turn my back on them when I needed them most. You ruined my life." I rambled. "Fuck you, I'm going."

I stormed past my mother and saw Liy and Bottle waiting outside on their bikes. I followed them down the steps of my house and mounted my bike, ready for the rescue of my life.

"No! No! Pen! Don't do this to me!" My mother started to cry.

"I'm sorry, mom, but I need to save my friends."

Bottle and Liy smiled as I ran away from the house. I got on my bike and started riding with them.

"Where's everybody else?" I asked.

"That's what we're doing. Getting everyone together to destroy this thing once and for all." Liy explained.

"Bottle, what made you want to help too? Liy punched you in the face."

"That's in the past. This is the present," Bottle stared at me, deadpan.

"Next stop, Tree."

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TREE

Black Hole had started to grow on me. At this point, we were basically a married couple. We lived with each other and Black Hole made himself feel comfortable. Despite his snide remarks, he was always very polite in the house. He was hesitant to do anything, as he didn't want to ruin the house or Pen's room. He was just fun to be around.

"So, what are you planning to do today?" Black Hole asked with a smile.

"I don't know. One more week of summer and I'll be going off to college."

"I wish I could come," Black Hole frowned.

"You're too smart for everyone. You became a doctor when you were in ninth grade."

"Yeah, but I'd rather give up that job than be away from you."

"You're too cute, you know that?" I blushed.

Black Hole saw me blush and chuckled. I pulled him in to give him a kiss. Just when I was inches away from his face, my phone rang.

"Excuse me," I smiled.

I picked up the phone.

"Hello?"

"Hey, Tree, The entity... It got Remote."

"Holy shit, you're not kidding right."

"You think we would joke about that? We need your help. We'll be rolling by your house in a couple of minutes."

"Got it. I'll start my bike."

I hung up the phone.

"I heard the convo. I see your friends need you," Black Hole smiled.

"Yeah... I think you know what they need me for, right?" I stared at Black Hole.

"Yeah. Stay safe, Tree," Black Hole softly smiled. He pulled me in for a quick kiss and I walked out the front door.

At the front were none other than Liy, Bottle, and Pen. They waved at me and I got on my bike, determined to save a friend from this curse.

"It's been so long. What have you all been doing?"

"We'll explain later. We got a score to settle," Liy clenched a fist.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PILLOW

The day was long. I was shopping online for a new set of shoes for my first day of college which was coming up soon. I found a good pair that matched my clothes. Excited, I was about to check out when my phone started to ring. Thinking it was a caller about a question from the library, I picked up.

"Hi, this is Pillow, how can I help you?"

"Pillow, we need you."

"Who's this again?"

"Liy. The entity got Remote. We need you outside as fast as possible. We're all waiting outside."

"Sure. I'll be right outside with my motorbike."

I hopped off the computer immediately. The shoes can wait. My friend needed my help, and a friend of mine wouldn't die on my hands. Ever since I lost Pie, I couldn't imagine losing another friend.

I opened the garage and started my motorbike. I strapped my helmet on and coasted outside. I was met with everyone except Remote and Lightning. Since they told me what I would be getting myself into, I brought a flashlight and a can of pepper spray. It wasn't much, but it would suffice.

"How did this happen?" I asked.

"Gee, like we know," Tree rolled his eyes.

"We don't know, but all we know is that the entity got Remote. All we gotta do is get Lightning and we'll be all set to go visit the graveyard once again." Liy explained.

We rode away on our vehicles, determined to save our friend.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: LIGHTNING

I sat at home on my bike. My friends had called prior to inform me that we'd be saving Remote. I was rather shocked as to why and how the entity had gotten a hold of someone like Remote. I saw my friends pull up to my house. I got on my bike and pedaled out of the garage.

I grabbed a bag of ammo and my dad's cattle gun.

"Hey, guys. Long time no see," I laughed.

"Great to see you too," Pen smiled.

"Final destination: The graveyard."

We all rode along the streets of Goiky, unsure of what would come next. I took my dad's cattle gun and a holster of ammo with me. I figured that a gun would be enough to take the entity down. The ride felt longer than it actually was. I was nervous to step foot into this

cursed house again, but it was the only way to save Remote. That motivation kept me going and made me determined to halt this curse.

We arrived at the graveyard. The building looked the same. Abandoned. We parked our bikes next to the graveyard's entrance and entered. Liy had brought a backpack with her. She handed all of us a flashlight.

"These should come in handy."

"Yeah, no fucking shit," Tree smiled.

We all walked up to the entrance of the building we were almost killed. Pen and Pillow looked the most spooked, as they were the ones who came out wounded last time.

Liy found some pieces of ld rebar from the building. She took some of the sharp pieces and fit the spears in her backpack. She brought enough for everyone except herself and one other person. Bottle scavenged the property. She found a glass bottle. Bottle smashed the end on the stairwell, breaking it in half. All of us looked up, confused as to what she was doing.

"Well, that didn't work," Bottle looked down at the broken glass.

"We're prepared. Let's get going," Liy led the way inside the house.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TROPHY

Knife, Yang, and I were riding around town in my dad's car. We had stolen some ammo from the local shops and we were firing my dad's pistol around town. Yang was a good driver, not getting spooked while Knife and I shot out the windows with the handgun.

We drove around the suburbs. That's when I saw something out of the corner of my eye.

"Is that Lightning and his friends?" I thought.

I elbowed Knife in the chest and pointed to them.

"Ugh... them again," Knife scowled.

"Agreed. Let's go fuck 'em up."

Knife and I hopped out of the car, but Yang was hesitant to come.

"Yang, get your lazy ass up. Let's go," I frowned impatiently.

"I don't know... This place seems sketchy," Yang eyed the place.

"Shut up. We're going in whether you like it or not."

"No. I'm not coming," Yang turned his head away.

Uncontrollable rage filled my body. That's when I heard the same phrase go through my head again. ***KILL THEM ALL. KILL THEM ALL***. I couldn't control my body. I pointed the gun at Yang's head.

"Come inside or else I'm gonna fucking shoot," I yelled.

"Trophy... What's going on with you? You've been acting so psychopathic the last couple of days," Yang shook at me, terrified for his life as he stared down the barrel of the gun.

"I'm not playing games. Do as I say, or die."

"Alright Trophy, calm the hell down. Let Yang stay and watch while we go in."

"DON'T TELL ME WHAT THE FUCK TO DO!" I pushed Knife off of me. I stepped on his stomach, pinning him to the ground. I started to laugh.

"Ya know, I never liked either of you anyway," I smiled.

I raised the gun to Knife's head and shot him. He died on the spot. I smiled at his dead body, basking in the temporary feeling of killing my friend.

"TROPHY!" Yang screamed.

I stared back at him with a grin. "You! You're the one who made me fuck up."

"Trophy. For the love of god, calm down," Yang tried to de-escalate

the situation.

"SHUT THE FUCK UP ASSHOLE!" I screamed.

I rushed at Yang, pinning him to the seat of the car. I raised the gun and shot him in the leg. He yelped in pain. I backed off of him as he clutched his injured leg.

"Trophy... please..." Yang hoarsely groaned.

"Fuck you," I smiled. I shot Yang in the head, killing him too.

I snapped out of the trance. I looked at my hands. My left hand with Yang's blood, and my right hand with Knife's blood. I spiraled into madness. I pointed the gun at my head and pulled the trigger.

CLICK

The gun was empty. I looked down the barrel and pressed the trigger again. Nothing. I screamed out and smashed my hand on the car door. I shattered the window glass and went into a frenzy.

"IT WAS THEM. THEY DID IT!" I thought.

I was now determined to kill Lightning. I didn't give a shit that he didn't do anything, but he pissed me off so much. He made me kill my friends. He made my life where it is now.

I stormed inside the house, ready to murder someone. I had a score to settle.

-

Hello guys! The next chapter is going to be SUPER action-packed, so make sure to stick around for that haha. If you haven't seen my last announcement, I'll be off Wattpad for about a week. Finals are so time-consuming and stressful. I deeply apologize for not being online. Anyway, thanks for reading, and have a damn good day/night! :)

Chapter 33: Publishing 12/21/23

Chapter 33 - Tree

Liy creaked open the door to the building. We all turned on our flashlights and made our way inside the building. Everyone but Bottle, who just stood by the entrance, staring blankly inside the house.

"Bottle?" Pillow asked.

"I'm scared... I don't think this is a good idea anymore," Bottle shook.

"Bottle, we all have to go. If we split up, this thing will kill us all individually. But if we stick together, all of us will in. I promise." Liy stuttered.

Bottle got a hold of herself and walked inside. She turned on a flashlight Liy had given her outside.

We opened the cellar and started to climb Down. Liy led the way the entire time. While we were climbing down, everyone was silent. No one said a word, and I could see why. We were on high alert just in case the worst happened. It wasn't long until we reached the underground house.

"Alright guys, let's stick together. Let's just find Remote and get the fuck outta here," Liy ordered.

We searched the entire three-story house.

"Remote? Remote?" I called out. Everyone else did too.

No answer.

We continued looking but with no luck. That is until Lightning found something in the basement. We all followed after him, as we were afraid of getting ambushed.

"Hey Pen, ya got a quarter? We gotta make a wish," Lightning smirked.

"Who would want to make a wish in that fucking thing?"

I saw what they were referring to. There was a giant well in the middle of the basement. I looked down the well. There appeared to be no bottom. I threw a piece of scrap down the well. To my dismay, there wasn't a sound, meaning that the well was bottomless.

"Remote?" Pillow called down the well. All we could hear was her voice echo through the walls of the old well.

"How are we supposed to get down there?" Lightning asked.

Liy looked around. "There!" Liy pointed to a long rope that was stashed in the corner of the room.

"Sweet."

Liy tied the top of the rope to the top of the well, fastening the rope in place. She threw the rope down. Although it didn't seem to hit any ground, she started to descend.

"Wait, Liy, are you sure this is a good idea?" Pen asked with concern.

"We checked the whole house. Nothing. This is our only option as of now," Liy stated.

I peered down the bottom of the well. Something seemed off about the well. Fear shot through my body and I started to shake at the thought of going down a deep dark well into who knows where.

"Guys, this looks super sketchy. Can we just not go down there? I'm concerned for our safety," I shook.

"Tree, remember what we told Bottle? We all stick together," Liy glared at me.

"I know, I know, but I'm just worried. What if one of us gets injured? Or even killed? Remember what happened last time we went to this crackhead house?" I argued.

"Tree. Friends stick together. Just do it this one time. Please. I know you're brave," Liy put a hand on my shoulder.

"Okay, I will," I whispered under my breath, still frightened at the thought.

Liy continued to climb down the rope. "What are you guys waiting for?" She called up once she was a couple of feet inside the well.

"I can do this. I can do this," Bottle said out loud.

"Sure you can," Pen smiled.

"Shut up."

"Guys! I found an exit! Although the well seems to be bottomless, I found a hole which leads to someplace else!" Liy cheered.

This made everyone else climb down too. Bottle jumped on the rope, descending right behind Liy. The rest followed, with only Lightning and I at the top. I decided to climb down first.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: LIGHTNING

It was only me up here. I was scared to climb down. If my friends could do it, I could do it too. I gripped the rope with my hands, ready to descend. That's when I heard footsteps behind me.

Out of nowhere, a solid object hit me in the back. I screamed out in pain. I turned around to see Trophy. His face had blood all over it. His eyes were wide and crazy. His smile was disoriented. Everything about the guy seemed uncanny.

Trophy picked me up and threw me against the wall. I lay on the ground in pain. Instead of going for me, he walked over to the well. I heard my friends.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TREE

All we could hear were Lightning's screams. We heard him yelp out in pain.

"Lightning? LIGHTNING!"

"You okay, Lightning?" Liy asked with concern.

We all stared up from the bottom of the well. We saw a figure emerge from the shadows. Trophy. He stared at us with a cocky smile. His face had so much blood on it that you couldn't see some of his facial features from far away. We all stared up in shock. All Trophy did was laugh at us.

"Trophy... Please... don't hurt Lightning," Pen pleaded.

All Trophy did was stare at us and laugh more. He took the rope in his hand. He started to pull the rope out of the well, making us unable to escape.

"NO NO NO NO!" Bottle panicked.

"GET THE ROPE GET THE ROPE!" Liy urged.

It was too late. Trophy took the rope

"Leave him alone!" Pillow yelled.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: LIGHTNING

Trophy tossed the rope away from my friends. They were trapped. He slowly walked over to me.

"You didn't listen to what I told you. Stay out of my fucking town," Trophy spoke. "I told your sister that too. Look where she is now. I smile whenever I walk by that old house. It's sad, sad that I couldn't have done that myself and that guy did it for me," Trophy smiled.

Trophy pounced on top of me. He pinned both of my hands to my sides, rendering me unable to move. He unclipped my dad's gun from my vest.

"Kinky," Trophy smiled.

I resisted his attempts. I tried to wiggle free from his pin.

"STOP FUCKING MOVING!" Trophy kicked me in the stomach while I was on the ground.

I was completely pinned now. Trophy's weight pinned my legs, and my arms were stuck by my sides. He took my cattle gun and cocked it back. He started to laugh. He pointed the end of the gun at my head. The end of the firearm mere inches from my face. This was it. I was going to die.

I remembered something. I hadn't loaded it. I looked back up at Trophy, who was about to pull the trigger. He pulled the trigger swiftly. All I could hear was an empty click of the chamber.

"The fuck?" Trophy looked down the barrel of the gun.

Since he reached for the gun with both hands, this gave me enough time to free my right hand. I picked up a rock next to me and bashed him over the head. He got distracted for a moment, which was enough time for me to push him off of me. He fell back. This wasn't over yet.

Trophy was quick to get up, but I was quicker. As Trophy got up, I ran at him full speed. The momentum I had caught from running was enough for me to push him far. I pushed him so hard, he fell down the well. All I could hear were his screams as he fell down the endless well. His bones shattered as they smashed against the stone walls of the old well. His screams of terror died out as he fell farther and farther.

"Holy shit!" Tree yelled out.

"Lightning!" Bottle smiled up at me.

"I'm okay. I'm okay," I smiled, exhausted.

I tied the rope to the top of the well once again. I also started to load my gun as I descended—big mistake. As I was loading the gun, the magazine of all my ammo dropped down the endless well.

"Shit!" I screamed out.

I started my descent down the well. I met up with all of the others.

"Is that everyone?" Liy asked.

I counted everyone's heads. "Including myself, that's seven people. Everyone's here."

We crawled through the space we had lowered ourselves into through the top of the well. Although the tunnel was rather small, it felt even smaller since we all had to crawl through the passage to get anywhere. Eventually, we wound up in an open space. The floor was wet and muddy. There were pipes lined along the sides of the wall, and the area had a disgusting smell to it. On top of all of this, the area was pitch black. Good thing Liy had given everyone a flashlight to use just in case.

We all turned on our flashlights. Although the flashlights were very good, we still couldn't see much of the area we were in.

"Hold on a second... Are these the sewers?" Pen asked.

"I think so," Pillow said.

"Ew!"

"Stop being a baby. Our goal is to find Remote. That's it," Liy asserted.

We ventured through the labyrinth of the sewers. The smell didn't get any better and we were heavily underprepared. Liy was the only one with supplies. Everyone else had only a flashlight. The only others with extra equipment were Pillow and I. Pillow brought a piece of rebar down to use as a spear. I had a pistol that was out of ammo. Very useless.

The sewers seemed to go on and on. We kept walking through the sewers. That's when I stepped on something slimy. I looked under my shoes and saw a giant splotch of blood on my sneakers. I shined my flashlight on the ground and saw a body. It looked like someone whom I recognized from my old High School. Her name was... Fanny? I couldn't recall her name, but I remember she was a total jerk to others at school. I shrugged and kept on walking.

"Guys?" Bottle worriedly asked.

"Yeah?" Pillow looked back.

"Where's Tree?"

Everyone instantly perked up. We shone our flashlights all around the sewer system. Once we looked all around us, we noticed that Tree wasn't with us.

"Okay, don't panic. Let's just stick together. I'm sure he just got lost," Liy worriedly laughed.

We all started running in a group. We frantically searched the sewer system for any leads. We retraced our steps and made it back to the start, but still no Tree. Now, we were starting to get worried.

"Remember what I said about not splitting up? We may have to do that now," Liy frantically said. "Pen, Bottle, and Pillow take the West pipe. The rest of you guys follow me," Liy ordered.

Since we were in a hurry, no one questioned Liy. We split up into groups of three to find Tree. Time was ticking. We didn't have any time to waste. Ten thousand thoughts started flowing through my head. What happened to Tree? Is he okay? What if he died?

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TREE

I was walking with my friends at one point, but they disappeared right in front of my eyes. In a fraction of a second, I got transported to another part of the sewer. That's what I had thought at least. I looked around for my friends in a hurry, but couldn't find them. I ran to the right as fast as I could, my legs starting to get tired as I ran.

I hit a dead end. This end was a large room. There were pipes with leaking water lining the walls. This room smelled even worse than the ones before. I looked around until I heard a voice come from the end of an empty pipe at the end of the room.

"Tree..." The voice quietly whispered.

I turned around and faced the source of the voice. I whipped my flashlight around and shined it inside the pipe. Nothing. The only thing I could hear were footsteps from the other side of the pipe.

"R-r-remote? I-i-is that y-you?" My voice shook with fear.

I heard more silent laughter and the footsteps on the other side of the pipe got louder. I got closer to the pipe, holding my flashlight directly over my chest so I could see everything inside the pipe. My heart stopped. On the other side of the pipe was the entity. It looked more sinister than before. It had the same body, but its face had a larger smile and it's eyes were orange instead of red. It poked its head around the opening and smiled before vanishing behind the wall. I gasped in fear and jumped back.

In the blink of an eye, the entity was gone. There was nothing in sight anymore. I heard the sound of metal clanking and more child laughter around me. This time, it sounded like it was in the same room.

"GUYS???" I screamed out. I shined my light all around the walls of the room.

"PEN??? LIY??? ANYONE???"

I heard metal clanging against the walls of the room. It was now that I had noticed there was a stairwell here. There was also a second floor that looked down on the wet, flooded ground that I was standing on. I shined my flashlight all around the room, trying to see what was making the sound.

The footsteps got louder, and the laughter of children got louder too. I frantically turned around until I got dizzy. The footsteps were now making water-splashing noises. This thing was in the same room as me. I turned around and saw the clown lunge at me. It took me from behind.

The clown sunk its claws into my shoulders. It slammed me into the water. I screamed for help. It reached its arm out, turning it into a long tentacle. It wrapped the tentacle around my arms, securing them in place.

"HELPPPP!!" I screamed out. I screamed at the top of my lungs, hoping my friends would hear.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PILLOW

Ten minutes after we initially started looking for Tree, we couldn't find him. Fearing for our safety, we decided to group up and continue searching. We searched until I heard something. It was a scream coming from a different part of the sewer system.

"GUYS GUYS! I HEARD TREE!" I yelled out.

"WHERE?" Liy asked.

"THIS WAY! HE'S FUCKING SCREAMING FOR HELP!"

"That's not good. We have to go as fast as possible," Pen shook.

We all sprinted in the direction that I pointed the voice out in.

We made it to the room where Tree was still screaming. We heard his screams of terror through the wall. However, we were separated by a thick steel door. We all grabbed the handle and pulled.

"FUCK! THIS THING WON'T BUDGE!" Lightning struggled.

"PULL!" I yelled.

We all pulled with all our might. We managed to force the door open. The door fell to the ground with a thud. Instantly, we all rushed inside the room.

"Tree? TREE?" Pen yelled as we went through the room.

We ran through the dark room until we stumbled upon something that made everyone freeze. The monster caught Tree. It had Tree on the ground. The entity was feasting on the boy's face. He wasn't moving and the clown continued to eat Tree's face as we watched in horror.

"WHAT THE FUCK IS THAT?" Bottle screamed.

The entity noticed us and stopped eating. It let go of Tree and walked backward into the shadows, making grotesque gurgling noises. It went around a corner and transformed back into the tall black figure

we had all seen before.

"WHAT THE SHIT?" Pen projected, as his voice shook with fear.

Everyone else including myself started to tremble and mutter words. We all got our composure back and instantly went to check up on the injured Tree. His face was bleeding from both sides from the excessive teeth marks on his face. Although the injuries weren't too bad, they were still bleeding like hell and had to hurt.

"TREE!" We all screamed as we rushed to Tree.

Tree got up and huddled himself against a wall. He started crying and yelling as we tried to calm him down and aid his wounds.

"YOU GUYS LEFT ME! YOU GUYS MADE ME COME DOWN HERE!" Tree continued to cry.

"TREE WE'RE SORRY!" Everyone grabbed Tree and tried to comfort him. Nothing seemed to work. Tears flooded his eyes and he continued to scream.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: BOTTLE

We aided Tree. Liy frantically searched through her backpack for the medical kits she had brought with her. What was strange was that when she pulled the backpack off, the top zipper had been opened.

"SHIT SHIT! WHERE IS IT???"

I watched her search until something moved in the corner of my eye. It distracted me for a quick moment. As my friends tried to calm Tree down, I saw the figure. It was the shape of a kid. It ran off into the distance. Seeking revenge, I got up and chased after it. Lightning left his gun on the floor. I picked it up and chased the figure.

"Bottle?" Pillow called behind me.

"BOTTLE???" Pen called.

-

Whew! What a chapter! I knew you guys would love this one. I'm back! Finals are officially over, and I can rest, meaning I can write more of my story! Writing this story is so much fun, and I'm more motivated than ever after having a writing drought for the past week. Thanks for reading, and have a damn good day/night! :D

Chapter 34 (THE GRAND FINALE): Publishing 12/23/23

Chapter 34 - Bottle (PART 1 OF 2)

I followed the childlike figure through the sewer. It was hard to see the figure in the dark, but my flashlight illuminated enough area for me to see it in the dark. I ran behind it for about five minutes until the figure led me to a giant room. This room was more grotesque than anything I had ever seen before. Here, there were bodies of multiple children and teens, all scattered around the floor. This room was bigger than anything I had seen. The ceiling stretched miles into the air and there was a pile of items in the middle of the room. There were also objects lining the edges of the giant room, which seemed to stretch about 200 feet across.

While chasing the figure, I saw something out of the corner of my eye. It was Remote. She was sitting on top of one of the sewer pipes. Her eyes were white and she was in a trance. I paused for a moment and tried to reach her, but she was too high up. I looked back over and saw the kid running away.

I followed the kid, but not before looking back at Remote, who was still in a trance.

"I'll come back for you, Remote,"

The figure ran through another doorway, leading me to a slightly smaller room in the sewer.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PEN

We all walked through the sewer. It didn't take much longer for Tree to calm down.

"Bottle?" I called out, shining my flashlight in front of me.

"Bottle!," Liy called behind me.

As we walked through the sewers, the water went up to our ankles, soaking our shoes in the process.

I tripped over something in the water, resulting in me falling into the dirty water.

"Don't be so clumsy dude, it's graywater," Tree watched.

I started to get up, but then I saw something. Two skulls with flesh still on them floated to the surface. We all screamed in terror and ran through the sewer.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: BOTTLE

I continued walking through the sewers, chasing the figure. I made it into a smaller room, but that's when the footsteps of the small child stopped. I looked around the small room with Lightning's gun raised at my side.

I continued walking through the room until something caught my eye. It was... my little brother? He stood in the middle of the room and I carefully approached him, still thinking my brain was playing tricks on me.

FLASHBACK: BOTTLE

It was a stormy day. Today I was sick, missing out on some middle school exams. I didn't get sick often, but when I did, I wouldn't say I liked it. I blew my running nose on a nearby tissue. I checked the time. 7:00 in the morning. I decided to go back to sleep, but my door slowly opened.

My little brother walked in with a look on his face. He had a raincoat on and was about to go outside.

"Bottle?" My little brother asked.

"Yes, Flasky?" I sickly answered.

"Can you still come to school with me? My school is right next to

yours," My little brother asked.

"I would if I wasn't dying," I smiled.

"Not dying!" He frowned.

"Didn't you see the vomit coming out of my nose?"

"That's disgusting."

"Hey, I have an idea! Can you go get me that box from my closet?"

"Okay!"

My little brother walked over to the closet and retrieved a small box.

"Thanks."

I opened it and found what I had been looking for. I pulled out a heart-shaped magnet, which could split into two. One half of the heart said "Best" and the other half said "Friends". I split the magnet and gave my brother half of it.

"Here, this will always remind you that I'll always love you and that you're in my heart. Whenever you look at this, just think that my sister is there," I smiled.

My brother smiled, "Thank you Bottle!"

I was then met with a giant hug. Although my little brother was only in 1st grade, he still jumped on me with all of his weight. I hugged him back. I didn't care if I was sick.

He was about to leave the room. "I'm gonna be late for school. Bye, Bottle!" My brother waved.

"Bye! Have fun!" I smiled back. He was so pure.

However, I didn't know this would be the last time I would see him...

BACK TO PRESENT

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: LIY

We continued walking through the tunnels and labyrinths of the sewer. That was until Lightning noticed something.

"Guys! Look!" Lightning pointed to the doorway of another room. It seemed much bigger than anything.

We all walked inside the room and scanned around. This place was huge. The room was super big and the ceiling seemed to stretch infinitely. There was also a mound of trash in the middle.

"There's Remote!" Lightning noticed.

"Remote!!!" I called.

All of us sprinted towards Remote. Her eyes were white and she was sitting straight up on top of a sewer pipe. Lightning and Pen decided to climb the pipe to get to her. They were right next to her on top of the pipe.

"How are we gonna get her down?" Pen asked.

"Figure it out!" I called.

Lightning let his intrusive thoughts win and pushed Remote off the pipe. To everyone's dismay, she started floating. It was something straight out of a superhero movie. We all watched as she drifted across the air. That's when Pen saved the day and leaped for Remote. He was able to grab her leg and pull her down to the ground. Lightning climbed down behind him.

Remote was now standing on the ground floor, but she was unconscious and her eyes were whiter than a ghost.

"Remote! REMOTE WAKE UP!" I shook her. I proceeded to slap her. "WHY ISN'T SHE WAKING UP???"

Everyone else stood as they watched me start to cry. My tears soaked her shirt. I looked at her one last time.

"This has to work," I thought.

I pulled myself into the unconscious Remote and kissed her on the

lips. Everyone else stood there and watched.

"Wow, Liy," Tree laughed.

Remote's hand started to move. Her eyes became visible again. She took a deep breath before waking up fully.

"You guys saved me? Why?" Her voice was hoarse.

"Because you're our friend, and the best girlfriend ever," I smiled.

Remote shed a tear and put her hands on my shoulders.

"Jesus fuck," Pen laughed. He hugged them both at the same time. Lightning and everyone else soon joined in. We all group-hugged for a very long time, happy that our friend was alive and well.

The hug didn't last much longer.

"Wait, guys, we need to find Bottle too," Pillow commented.

We all remembered and started following Pillow. "I think she went this way."

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: THIRD PERSON NARRATOR

The group traversed through the sewers. Since Bottle wasn't too far, the group was able to find her rather quickly. They had found her, but couldn't say anything as they were all speechless at the sight of her younger brother. All of them knew what had happened to him and didn't say a word. This had to be fake.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: BOTTLE

I saw Flasky. My eyes started to swell with tears.

"What took you so long?" My brother asked.

"I've been looking for you this whole time," I started to cry.

"I couldn't find my way out of here!" My brother started crying too. "I stared at this the entire time," He showed me the charm I had given him before he had gone to school that day.

I saw this and broke down in tears. I recognized that magnet. I had given him that magnet so long ago, Although it was rusted over, I could still see the message in the steel.

"Take me home Bottle!" My brother whined. "I wanna go home!" He said in a scared tone. He stared at me with large, innocent eyes. He started to resume crying once again. "I miss you! I wanna be home with Mom and Dad again!"

I couldn't take it anymore. I just looked at him. "I wouldn't want more than anything for you to be home." I bawled. "Mom, Dad, they miss you so much."

"I love you Bottle!" My brother cried.

I paused for a moment, drying my tears. "I love you Flasky."

I knew this wasn't my brother. My hand shook with trauma. I pulled Lightning's gun out of my pocket and aimed it at my little brother's head. He started to shake and cry as I raised the barrel to his forehead.

"But you're not Flasky." I held back more tears.

I pulled the trigger. The gun went off with a bang, effectively shooting my brother in the head.

"That shit was loaded?" Lightning chuckled behind me.

The body of my brother fell to the ground with a thud. The bullet hole didn't bleed but stayed there for everyone to see. I watched as my motionless brother lay on the ground.

In a moment, the body started rapidly shaking. The angry screams of my brother erupted from the body as it started to convulse on the ground. It shook for about thirty seconds. It grew two long, black arms and legs. Its body also transformed into the monster we all knew. Finally, the head changed into that demonic nightmare.

The monster sat up and hunched over. It stared into my soul.

"Go ahead, shoot," The monster smiled.

"BOTTLE SHOOT HIM!" Liy yelled.

"KILL IT!" Tree urged.

I raised the gun to the monster's head, ready to pull the trigger.

"SHOOT IT IN THE FUCKING HEAD!"

Lightning was silent. "It's not loaded," He muttered.

"HEY! IT'S NOT LOADED!" Lightning yelled so I could hear him more clearly.

I pulled the trigger. Nothing went off. However, the entity still had a bullet wound in its head. Black, viscous blood poured out of the open wound and it tilted its head back. It started to shake and scream.

"What the fuck..."

-

Hello! I am SO SO sorry that this part was so short! I completely lost track of time and couldn't finish the chapter. However, don't worry. The book will be finished by tomorrow, and I'll follow up with a quick chapter on Christmas Eve to make it up to you guys haha. Thanks for reading, and have a damn good day/night! :p

-

Oh yeah, announcement. There WILL be a Christmas special coming on Christmas day! It will be posted at the same time as usual. Stay tuned for that!

Chapter 34: Publishing 12/24/23

Chapter 34 - Bottle (PART 2 OF 2)

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: THIRD PERSON NARRATOR

The monster started to convulse while standing. It charged straight at Bottle and pounced on top of her.

"Bottle watch out!" Liy called.

Bottle fell on her back and used the gun as a shield. The monster attempted to bite her, but she used the gun as a guard and placed it between the monster's teeth as it tried to bite her. Saliva drooled from the monster's mouth as it continued to laugh while the gun was in its mouth. Eventually, the monster took hold of the gun and threw it aside with its mouth.

Bottle thought she was a goner as the entity loomed over her, ready to eat her alive. However, Remote grabbed a piece of fencepost from off the floor and swung at the entity.

The monster caught Remote's attack and growled at her.

"Remote NO!" Pen screamed.

It threw the weapon aside. Lightning saw this as an opportunity and went up to swing at the entity with another piece of fencepost, which was thicker than the one Pillow was holding. Lightning was about to swing, but he failed to notice that the monster had a brain. The monster saw what he was going to do and it clawed at the kid. The impact of the claw threw Lightning across the room. He hit the wall of the sewer with a loud thud. He lay on the ground in pain. Remote went to check on him.

"HEY FUCKFACE! UP HERE!" Pillow teased the entity.

The entity looked up and saw her on top of one of the parts of the large scrap pile in the middle. She held the spear in both hands and jumped on the entity's back. She shoved the side of her spear in the middle of the entity's mouth, rendering it unable to bite. It thrashed around, trying to shake Pillow off.

"Help Pillow!" Remote called from the corner.

Liy joined Pillow on the entity's back. She held her in place and both of them latched onto the long stick with all their might. The entity spun around, trying its best to get them off. Even with its razor-sharp claws, it couldn't take them off.

Pen joined in and found a large knife on the ground. He slashed the entity's hand and continued to slash at the arm of the monster. The monster ignored the pain, and instead reached its other arm out and grabbed Tree by the shirt. It also grabbed Pen with its injured arm and swung them both around.

Pen dug the knife into the entity's hand. He tried to dig the knife into more lethal parts, but he couldn't reach it. After being swung around, the monster let go of Pen and Tree, sending them flying against the walls of the sewer.

The entity was angry. It reached its arms backward and grabbed Pillow. It grabbed her by the torso and threw her off. She tumbled to the ground and rolled towards the group of other friends. Liy was the only one on the entity's back. She was tough to shake off.

Eventually, the entity was able to flip Liy off of its back. It took Liy to the ground in front of it. The entity grabbed Liy, taking her hostage.

"LIY!" Pillow said in horror.

The entity stared back at them all with a wicked smirk. It stared at the other six friends as Liy tried to break out of the grasp.

"Let her go!" Remote cried.

"No. I'll take her. I'll take ALL of you. I'll feast on your tasty flesh as I feed on your fear," The entity smiled.

No one said a word as they saw Liy start to tear up. Her mouth being covered by the entity's hand.

"Or..." The entity started talking again. ***"You can leave us be. I'll take her. Only her. I'll stop bothering you guys for the rest of your lives. You will all grow, and thrive, and live HAPPY lives! Until old age takes you guys.***

"Leave..." Liy cried. "I'm the one who dragged you all into this. I'm s-s-s-sorry," She cried out with fear.

"S-s-s-s-s-s-s-orry," The entity mocked before laughing at her.

"Go!" Liy called.

Remote looked at everyone. "Guys, we can't!"

"You're right," Pen whispered.

"I'm sorry..." Liy apologized to the group. Her eyes were glossy from the tears wetting her eyes.

"I told you Liy. I fucking told you," Bottle looked at Liy. "I don't wanna die."

Liy closed her eyes and accepted her fate.

"This is all your fault, Liy. You punched me in the face, you made my best friend commit suicide, you brought me to a fucking insane asylum," Bottle angrily ranted.

The monster frowned at Bottle's comment on its house.

"And now... We're gonna have to kill this fucking thing." Bottle picked up a nearby bat.

The entity became steaming mad. It threw Liy to the side and charged at Bottle.

"WELCOME TO DEATH PACT ASSHOLE!" Bottle asserted.

The monster let out a sickening growl before lunging straight at

Bottle. Bottle swung the bat and whacked the entity across the face, causing it to flinch and step back.

Lightning got intrigued and stepped in. He swung a metal rod at the entity's head. However, unlike Bottle's swing, a hand shot out of its mouth and blocked Lightning's swing. Lightning froze with the rod inside the entity's hand. He swore he could hear screams coming from the inside of the monster.

"LIGHTNING! HELP!"

Tree had to snap Lightning out of it. He picked up a loose chain off the ground and swung it into the entity. The end of the chain connected with the hand grabbing the rod and disintegrated into thin air. The monster turned its attention toward Tree, but Bottle smacked the entity in the back of the head with a bat. The monster's face morphed into the same clown Tree was scared of, attempting to scare him. Tree froze at the sight, and the monster charged him in retaliation.

Right when the monster got near, Tree swung the chain again, smacking the entity across the face. Lightning attempted another go. He charged at the entity and managed to land a hit on the entity's back, but the monster grabbed him and swung him onto the ground. One of the arms turned into a sharp dagger-like object. It attempted to stab Lightning, but Lightning rolled away, dodging the attacks.

While the monster was distracted by Lightning, Pillow got her bearings, ran up behind the entity, and stabbed it through the back. The spear went out of the entity's chest and blood splattered out of the open wounds. The entity growled in pain and violently thrashed around as Pillow lifted it with her spear.

It wasn't over yet though. The monster turned its head around 180 degrees and turned into some weird creature no one could explain. What it did have was a long tongue. It stretched out its tongue and wrapped Pillow around the neck. It started to pull Pillow into its jaws as it tried to bite her as she got closer.

"AAAAHHHH!" Pillow screamed.

Right when Pillow was about to get eaten, Liy came out of nowhere and whacked the monster's tongue with a fencepost. The monster's tongue got cut clean off and the remains disappeared into thin air. The entity fell to the ground in pain as Liy watched over and Pillow whispered, "Thank god," happy to be alive.

While the entity was down, Bottle swung her bat into the back of the entity again, knocking it to its knees. Liy had another go and stabbed the fencepost into the side of the entity. Pen smacked the entity across the face again with a club, causing it to flinch.

The entity then started to cough and tried to get its bearings. Its face turned into a zombie and it stared at Pen. It vomited all over Pen's face. Pen spat out some of the vomit.

"Well fuck you too!" Pen yelled as he kicked the entity in the head, sending it onto its back.

It bounced up and got on all fours, this time, facing Remote. It morphed into her mother and looked up at her.

"Hey Remote, aren't you still my little-"

Remote was in a frenzy. She stabbed the entity, this time straight through the mouth. The long piece of rebar pierced through the entity, impaling it into the ground under them.

The entity cried out and spat the spear out of its mouth. However, instead of looking menacing, the entity looked scared. It stumbled back, breathing heavily as the seven friends backed it into a corner. It stumbled on all fours as it started to cry and hyperventilate.

"That's why you didn't kill Remote. Because she wasn't afraid. And we aren't either. Not anymore. Now, you're the one who's afraid. Enjoy starving to death," Liy sternly stared the entity down.

The entity convulsed and started to cry. It started to utter phrases no one could understand. Its eyes were blue and it rested on its back. It stumbled back and saw another well. It climbed inside the well and hung onto the side, staring up at the friends.

The entity's face started to crumble and flakes of its skin started

falling off.

"So, this is what it feels like to be scared?" The entity asked itself before disappearing into thin air. As it crumbled away, it let out a blood-curdling scream and vanished.

All of them stood over the well without saying a word to each other. They all stared at each other. Each of them thought, "Did that really happen? Are we done with this nightmare once and for all?" Liy gave Remote a big hug, and the others followed, leading to a giant group hug.

Bottle was the first to leave when she noticed a glistening piece of clothing in the distance. It was black and red with some gold accents. Everyone else followed her. Bottle looked at the name that was written on it.

"PROPERTY OF PIE"

Bottle did nothing but cry her eyes out upon seeing this. Pillow gave her a warm hug from behind and comforted her. After a moment, the others started weeping too while hugging each other.

The friends made their way out of the sewer, not looking back. They started to talk more, celebrating their victory against something so powerful. The victory felt bittersweet. They all went through so much, and they had lost a friend in the process, but it was all worth it to save Goiky from the evils of the underneath.

They all gathered outside the graveyard and each one mounted their bike.

"Hey, guys?" Bottle asked.

"Yeah?"

"Can we do one more thing before we all go home?"

"What's that?" Tree asked.

"There's just one thing I need to do to Pie's grave.

The friends agreed and made their way towards Pie's old house. It was starting to get dark, but the friends could still see. They pedaled throughout the neighborhood, thankful to be alive at that moment. Each one of them took a deep breath of fresh air and smiled as the sun started to set. Eventually, the friends arrived at Pie's house right before it got dark.

Bottle opened the door to the house. Nothing had changed since they left. The items were still scattered on the floor, the furniture was still in the same spot, and the doors were even still left open.

The friends made their way to the backyard where Pie was buried. Bottle had brought the sweater to the house. She laid the sweater on the tombstone and smiled.

"Guys! Guys! Look what I found!" Lightning yelled.

The friends looked over and saw Lightning holding an Ouija board.

"We should try talking to Pie."

They thought it was a good idea to try to talk to Pie. The friends set the board up and placed it on the stone outside in the backyard. Each member placed their hand on the planchette and they proceeded to talk to Pie.

"Pie, if you're here, can you give us a signal?" Bottle called.

Nothing happened.

"I knew this was just a my-" Pen was cut off by a sudden breeze. A gust of wind blew a leaf over to the friends. The leaf had bite marks that a caterpillar had eaten out of. These bite marks formed a smiley face. Now, the friends knew that Pie was present.

"Pie... How are you doing?" Pillow asked.

"The planchette moved around the letters. It spelled the sentence, "JUST VIBIN".

"Ah, Pie, you still have the same humor," Tree laughed.

The planchette started to move again. This time, it spelled, "LOVE"

The friends cried happy tears as they now knew that Pie was there and watching over them.

Pie, will you always watch us and keep us in mind?" Bottle asked.

The planchette moved fast. This time, it moved to the corner of the board, indicating YES.

"Pie, what do you think of Lightning?" Pen giggled. Lightning frowned at him.

"IDK HE VALID IG"

The friends burst into fits of laughter.

"Alright Pie, we're gonna get going now," Pillow smiled.

The planchette moved to "BYE".

All of the friends left the house except for Liy.

"Liy, we're leaving!" Remote motioned.

"Wait... I gotta do something!" Liy yelled back.

Liy approached Pie's grave and started to cry. She organized the sweater and put some flowers on the grave.

"Pie, we did it. We fucking did it." Liy started to cry once again. She sat down next to the grave, closing her eyes as she drifted into a state of relaxation.

THE END!

-

GUYS! IT'S OVER! THE BOOK IS OFFICIALLY DONE! However, don't leave yet! There will still be a Christmas special tomorrow at 10 AM ET! Also, I will be writing an epilogue, so stay tuned for that haha. This book has been so much fun to write! I made so many memories with you guys along the way. You guys reading my story puts a tear

in my eye. That's how grateful I am. Thank you guys so so so so much for reading, and have a damn good day/night! :D

Christmas Special: Publishing 12/25/23 HO HO HO

A White Christmas

The story takes place one year ago (Pie is still alive)

"PIE! PIE! WAKE UP!" Bottle excitedly squeaked. Bottle laughed as she picked up a pillow off of Pie's bed and started hitting her with it.

"Okay, okay," Pie smiled as she slowly got up.

"MERRY CHRISTMAS!" Bottle shook her.

"Merry Christmas, Bottle," Pie lightly smiled. "Did you eat the Christmas cookies again this year?"

"Ummmm... oops... hehe," Bottle now started to nervously look away.

"I knew you would, so I bought extras. DON'T touch these though," Pie chuckled.

Bottle grabbed Pie by the hand and they both went downstairs and opened the presents under Pie's tree. Her parents were downstairs already.

"Is Pie up, dear?" Pie's mom smiled at Bottle.

"Yep! She's a real sleepyhead."

Pie's dad chuckled and sipped his morning coffee.

Bottle had piled her gifts up on the living room floor. Pie's parents were holding theirs, waiting for Pie.

"Your parents are on the fireplace. Don't forget your stocking stuffers!" Pie's father smiled.

"Bet."

Pie went over to the fireplace, retrieved her presents, and came back to the main room. She sat down on the ground, eager to open.

"Should we open the presents now?" Bottle asked.

Pie's parents nodded.

We started unwrapping. The wrapping paper came off easily, and each of them was eager to see what they would get for Christmas

"What'd you get, Pie?" Bottle smiled.

"Yo! I got a new lighter! Thank you guys!" Pie smiled in delight. She got up and went to hug her parents. Her parents smiled back and hugged her too. Bottle sat on the ground awkwardly, but she didn't mind. Pie's parents treated her like their own since her father couldn't do what he had to.

"Woah? You guys got me this?" Bottle called out from the living room.

"Yep! We knew you'd like it!" Pie's mother called out.

Pie walked over to see what Bottle got. She held up a new phone.

"Did you guys get her a phone?" Pie asked her parents.

"Well, her old one was breaking down every five seconds, so we figured she could use one."

"Where's my phone?" Pie joked and nudged her dad.

"You haven't opened all your presents yet!"

"Fair enough."

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PIE

I walked back over to Bottle and opened my next present. I unwrapped this present, which was comically large compared to the last one.

"Holy smokes! An electric scooter?"

I immediately unboxed the giant box it came in. Out popped a folded-up scooter, which instantly lit up once I plugged it into the wall to charge.

"Cool!" Bottle smiled.

"I know," I shot her a look.

Bottle and I kept opening presents. We both continued to open gifts and get things we had wanted the entire year. Ever since a couple of years ago, Bottle has always lived with us because of her home life. At this point, she was like a sister to me, and my parents treated her like their own daughter. It felt good not to be an only child on the holidays, as it could get boring at times.

"Pie, didn't you say that you and Bottle were going over to a friend's house for Christmas today? His name was... Tree I think?" My dad asked.

"Oh yeah! I completely forgot!" I rushed up the stairs and started changing out of my pajamas. I shut the door behind me and started to change out of my pajamas and into some more clothes that were very close to my pajamas. They had the same comfort, but they were socially accepted to wear in public.

"HEY PIE! I GO- oh, sorry," Bottle opened my door to show me a gift she had gotten. She opened the door to see me topless, about to change into a sweater.

"Try knocking next time," I shot her a look.

Bottle laughed, "Once again, sorry, I'll be waiting outside for you."

I laughed and closed the door and proceeded to finish changing. I got ready and walked back down the stairs. Bottle was already by the door with a scarf and a heavy jacket on.

"What's up with all of the winter gear, Elsa?" I mocked.

"Didn't you see it's snowing outside?" Bottle asked.

"I saw, but I'm not weak. Jackets are so last year," I smiled.

"You're sassy even during the holidays," Bottle commented.

"Yup."

We walked out to the car and got ready to drive to Tree's house. My parents waved from the living room window. We waved back and I started the engine. The gas from the back of the car smoked up the air. I lit a cigarette in the car with my new lighter.

"At least open the window if you're gonna smoke," Bottle frowned.

"Oh yeah, sorry."

I opened the window and smoked a cigarette while I drove. It was hard to see through the thick air of winter, and the falling snow didn't help much. Bottle cheekily played with her new phone in the back and she took a couple of selfies, still getting used to how a camera works.

We got to Tree's house in no time. His garage was already open, so I slipped my car inside. The cool air hit me as I opened the door, but I knew that we would probably be inside for the majority of the time we were hanging out.

"Bottle, we're here," I smiled. Bottle had fallen asleep in the back. She didn't wake up when I called her.

"Do I have to do this again?" I silently facepalmed myself.

With a smirk on my face, I walked out to the front of the house. Since it was snowing, I scooped up a ball of snow and brought it over to the car. I made sure to gather a lot of snow to cause the most damage possible. I walked back over to the car with the snowball and tapped Bottle on the shoulder.

"W-what?" Bottle slowly opened her eyes.

"RISE AND SHINE!" I smiled as I threw the giant snowball at her.

"AHHHH!" Bottle got scared as the snowball hit her in the face.

"OOH FACE SHOT!" I gloated.

"YOU'RE GONNA PAY FOR THAT!" Bottle grimaced.

Bottle hopped out of the car. I followed in her footsteps. We started gathering snow off the ground and started chucking snow at each other. We both landed a couple of shots, but we eventually stopped since we didn't want to expend all of our energy before we even entered Tree's house. We both walked up to the front of the house, slightly covered in snow.

I rang the doorbell to Tree's house. There was a mistletoe above the doorstep.

"Nice try, idiot," I smiled as I looked up.

Tree opened the door with a smile.

"HA! You're under the mistletoe!"

"Actually, I'm not. Nice try Tree boy," I laughed at him and pointed.

"Gosh damn it."

Tree let us in. He greeted Bottle and I. We walked in and saw everyone in the house doing different things. There weren't many people, but the people who were here were our close friends from school. Pen and his buddy, Eraser, played video games on the television. Lightning, Marker, Foldy, and Stapy were playing cards at the table. Pillow and Teardrop were talking with each other on the couch (sign language). Lastly, Black Hole, Liy, and Remote were outside in the backyard making snowmen.

"Wassup guys!" Pen called. Eraser waved to us too.

I chuckled. "Hi Pen, Hi Eraser. Whatcha guys playing?"

"We're playing Warzone, the best game known to man."

"That's debatable," Eraser smiled.

Pen nudged him.

"Hi, Pillow!" Bottle waved.

"Hey Bottle! Hey Pie!" Pillow waved. Teardrop motioned for us to come sit down.

We both walked over to the couch and sat down beside them. We talked about boys and we each rated every guy on a scale of one to ten. We also talked about who would get the best Christmas gifts and whatnot.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TREE

I went back outside with a coat and scarf on to rejoin the others in making snowmen. I brought some carrots from the refrigerator to use as noses for our snowmen.

"Guys! I found some carrots in the fridge!" I held up the carrots in my right hand.

"Let's go, dude!" Black Hole gave me a high-five.

We continued to work on our snowmen, while Remote and Liy worked on theirs. We were doing a competition on who could make the best snowman. After we finished, we would get some people to judge who won.

Black Hole got a giant ball of snow and placed it on the top of the snowman. We finished the guy up by placing one of Pen's caps on top, some rocks for the eyes and mouth, and finished it with the carrot. Our snowman looked rather generic, and Remote's snowman looked better than ours.

"Tree, we gotta beat them in this," Black Hole laughed.

"Agreed dude," I smiled.

Black Hole searched around for something we could use. He ended up walking back inside the house after he got an idea of what he was going to do.

Black Hole came running out of the house with cans of spray paint.

"Where the hell did you get that?" I curiously asked, concerned.

"Blocky gave it to me as a Christmas gift."

"You hang out with him?"

"Yeah, we're pretty good friends, why?"

"That's surprising."

Black Hole took the spray paint and sprayed some designs on the snowman. His idea worked. Our snowman looked so much cooler than Remote and Liy's. Liy glanced over at ours and scoffed, as we took competitions like this very seriously.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: STAPY

"I WIN!" I victoriously shouted as I put my last card down.

"Damn it, good game," Lightning smiled.

"You got so lucky," Marker smirked.

"Shut up, Marker," I mouthed.

"Stapy, chill out, it's just a game," Foldy softly smiled and gave me a high five.

We started another game. I was determined to win this one too.

"Hold on, before we start the game, wanna prank someone? This hangout needs spice," I smirked.

"Of course, you'd be the one to suggest that," Marker started chuckling.

"Once again, shut up Marker," I glared at him.

"I'll be down if I know who we're gonna be pranking," Lightning smiled.

"Oh, you'll know once I tell you," I smiled.

"No duh," Marker giggled.

All four of us whispered around the table. We decided to prank the people outside who were making snowmen since they were currently outside, busy with their projects.

"Okay... so what's this so-called 'Prank?'" Foldy curiously asked.

"So, my idea is that we can all go out and start pelting them with snowballs," I smiled.

"That's pretty uncreative, but it's funny," Lightning smiled.

I ran to my backpack and pulled out a snowball maker. Since the snowfall was large today, I could easily make snowballs fast by just scooping them up with the snowball maker.

We made snowballs in the front. Since I had planned for this, I also brought a cooler with me. We filled the cooler with snowballs from the front of the house, smiling as we did so. Lightning climbed a tree to shake some loose snow down. The loose snow fell on Foldy.

"Hey! What was that for?" Foldy looked up at Lightning.

"Surprise attack!" Lightning laughed.

Foldy chuckled. By now, the cooler was almost filled with snowballs. I carried the cooler to the backyard and we each grabbed some snowballs. We aimed at the unsuspecting people and got ready to throw,

"3... 2... 1... FIRE!" I shouted.

Foldy and I decided to go after Liy and Remote, while the other two attacked Black Hole and Tree. Foldy had a good throw, hitting Liy right in the cheek. My throw missed and hit Remote in the shoulder, but it still made a connection, which was good enough.

"Hey!" Remote glared at us.

We continued to throw snowballs at them. They tried to duck behind their snowman, but we chased them and kept pelting them.

"We gotta fight back Remote," Liy looked at Remote.

Remote nodded. The two made snowballs of their own and started throwing them at us.

"Foldy! Take cover!" I called.

We hid behind a tree as barrages of snowballs came our way. Remote and Liy were good at making snowballs. This would be a tough battle to fight.

The war raged on for ten minutes. Snowballs flew through the air. We eventually started throwing snowballs at Black Hole and Tree. Black Hole was deadly when it came to snowballs. He would pack them tight so they flew faster and hurt more when a connection was made.

Foldy and I met back up with Lightning and Marker. Now, it was a four versus four. We had to win this. That's when Marker had an idea. He told us that we could take them from behind.

Marker and I decided to sneak around the back, while Lightning and Foldy would distract them from the front. Marker and I went around the house and we were about to jump them. We both had perfect shots on the four of them, but that's when we heard a voice from inside the house.

"Guys! The food's ready!" Bottle called us from inside.

"Oh," Marker sighed.

The four looked behind them and saw us.

"Were you guys planning to ambush us? Nice try," Black Hole laughed.

"Man, you guys put up a fight," Marker laughed.

"You guys were really tough opponents," Tree smiled.

We all headed inside after the war with smiles on our faces.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: PEN

The food was here. There were so many things, it was like a buffet. There was roast beef in the middle of the table, a bowl of lobster bisque on the side, lasagna trays around the table, and many other foods. I decided to troll a bit with the seating. I knew who liked who, so I sat them next to each other on purpose. Tree and Black Hole sat next to each other, Remote and Liy sat next to each other, and Foldy and Stapy sat next to each other. It was clear these people liked each other romantically, so I sat them together. Eraser and I took the end seats.

We all took our seats and sat down.

"Wait, Pen?" Eraser asked.

"What's up, dude?" I questioned.

"Who made all this food? None of us can cook for shit," Eraser chuckled.

"Oh, Tree's mom is in the kitchen preparing everything," I smiled.

"Well then, I gotta remember to thank her afterward."

"Yup."

We all dug into our food and started to eat.

Author note: Look, I bet it would be rather boring for me to write about characters eating and talking. I bet you would fall asleep reading it, so I'm gonna skip it haha. Enjoy the rest LOL.

(Timeskip to after they're done eating and opening gifts)

Everyone was finished with their meal by now. We all sat in the living room and talked. There were many of us, so some of us had to sit on the ground. I went over to the tree and passed the presents out. This year, we played a game where each person would anonymously get someone a gift. That person wouldn't know who the gift was from, but the person giving the gift knew who it was to.

"Oh shoot! We have our presents in the car," Pie realized. She rushed out of the house to get them.

"Guys, don't peek," I ordered.

We all put our heads down until Pie came back and put the presents under the tree. She shuffled them up so we wouldn't know who she gave her presents to.

It was time to open. I passed the presents out to everyone. Once we all got our presents, we all decided to take turns opening since it would be more suspenseful that way. Plus, we were all 16 years old, so what's the worst that could happen?

We decided to go in alphabetical order, meaning Black Hole was first. He smiled and tore open his present. His present was a new hoodie. It said, "WHY DO I HEAR BOSS MUSIC?" On the front of the hoodie. It was rather good quality and he smiled at it.

"Man, anyone could've gotten me this. I can't figure this one out," He smiled.

Bottle was up next. She opened her present. Out popped a new game for her console. Someone gave her Minecraft. Not the best game, but it was still pretty dang good.

"Wow! This person knew what I liked. Thanks, anonymous!" Bottle held a thumbs-up.

"My turn," Eraser smirked. He unwrapped his box and got a new controller for his console. Man, people really liked gaming. Everyone opened their presents pretty quickly after Eraser opened his. Foldy was up next. She unboxed and got some wireless earbuds.

"Woah. These are expensive," She smiled. "Thank you!"

Lightning got some Pokemon cards. Liy got a phone case. Marker got a stuffed dog. It was now my turn. I eagerly opened the box to see what I would get. To my surprise, someone got me a basketball jersey for my favorite team, the Goiky Golden Knights. This person even knew who my favorite player was.

"Why are people getting such good gifts this year?" Tree smiled.

"I have no clue. This is why we're all such good friends," I smiled.

Everyone else resumed opening their gifts. Pie got some new shoes. Pillow got a katana. Remote opened hers and out popped a Lego set. Stapy opened his nonchalantly and got a tub of GFUEL.

"Damn, I'm gonna be real energetic this Christmas," Stapy laughed.

"Aren't you always energetic?" Marker asked.

"For the third time today, shut up Marker," Stapy frowned.

We chuckled. Teardrop opened her gift. Someone let their intrusive thoughts win and got her a microphone. Teardrop clearly didn't like it, but she was polite about it and chuckled.

"Someone's getting coal this year," Teardrop signed.

"What'd she say?" Eraser asked.

"Eraser! Don't be rude, It's Christmas!" I punched him in the arm.

"My bad! It's a question ya fatty," Eraser teased me.

Teardrop improvised. She used the microphone as a weapon and started swinging it around the room.

"Can I open mine:?" Tree asked.

"Sure dude," I laughed.

Tree opened his. He got a pack of real ninja stars. What was it with people getting weapons this year?

Once everyone was done, it was time for them to go, as Tree's family would visit later that day.

PERSPECTIVE SWITCH: TREE

Everyone walked out the door with their gifts. Before they left, my mom gave them all a 6 pack of Christmas cookies. These were

homemade, so they were better than the ones you could find at the store. We all said our goodbyes and people went out the door one by one.

"Man, what a hangout," Pen laughed and elbowed me.

"No kidding. That was fun," I smiled.

"That's only part 1 to Christmas. You still gotta hang out with family later today," Pen laughed.

I scoffed and went up the stairs to take a nap before my family came over. I was already tired and it wasn't even dinner yet. I had three hours to sleep, so I laid down still in the same clothes. I closed my eyes and drifted off to sleep, ready for what was to come this Christmas.

-

Hello everyone! MERRY CHRISTMAS! It's already arrived! I don't think it's just me, but the years seem to pass faster and faster as we live. Christmas is finally here, and I'm thrilled to enjoy it with some of you. Thank you guys so much for reading this jolly special, and have a HOLLY JOLLY CHRISTMAS TODAY!! Also, have a damn good day/night! :)))

Epilogue: Publishing 12/27/23

NEW BOOK COMING NEW YEARS

Epilogue

SEPTEMBER

The group decides to meet up again. College is starting and the friends are starting to separate for good, as they're getting older. They decide to meet up at the lake once again.

Remote's the first one there, and she watches as everyone else arrives at the lake.

"Hey, Remote!" Liy waved from a distance.

Remote happily ran over to her and hugged her. They hugged it out for a solid 5 minutes before finally releasing.

"Where should we sit?" Remote asked as she put her arm around Liy's neck.

"I don't know. That rock seems nice, as it's over the waterfall," Liy smiled.

Both of them walked over to the waterfall, holding hands. They stared at each other as the running of the water blocked out the sounds of the nearby city. Remote stared down into the clear water down below, seeing the person she had become from the challenges she had gone through. Liy stood by her side as they both took breaths of relaxation. They were about to kiss, but they got interrupted by a sound in the distance. Pen, Tree, and Lightning had all arrived together.

"Yo! Wassup guys!" Lightning waved.

"We're girls," Liy joked.

"Shush," Lightning laughed.

The boys joined them by the waterfall.

"Man, this place looks like a dream," Pen smiled.

"Tell me about it," Tree smiled.

It wasn't long until the rest of the friends arrived. Bottle and Pillow both rolled jup and joined them by the waterfall. The friends sat around in a circle, with slight mists of water splashing them as they talked to each other.

"Guys, there's something I wanna talk about," Liy smiled.

The group moved away from the waterfall and found a circle of logs, perfect to use as benches. They sat around and smiled at each other.

"I had a dream last night. I can only remember parts, but I thought I was dead," Liy got serious. The others did too. "We were all together, but this time, we were all older, like our parents' ages."

"What were we all doing?" Remote asked.

"I just remember how we all felt. We were all scared, but we were all by each others' side," Liy continued.

Remote stood up and pulled a knife out of her pocket. "I have an idea. We swear, if it isn't dead, or if it ever comes back and hurts the citizens of Goiky, we come back too," Remote told. Everyone cringed at this, but they eventually got the courage to stand up and do the oath with her.

"Why do you have a knife?" Bottle asked.

"You'll see in a second."

Remote cut her hand until blood came out. She cringed at the blood that flowed out of the palm of her hand. After she cut her hand, she went around the circle and cut the palm of everyone else's hand too.

"Ah, shit," Lightning winced in pain and shook his hand silently. He watched the blood pour down the middle of his hand. Everyone else, except for Liy, had a similar reaction.

When Liy's hand was cut, she barely even flinched, just looking at Remote with a smile as she did it.

Once everyone's hand was cut, they all held hands, forming a blood oath. They all held hands in a circle and closed their eyes for a few seconds. They soon released their hands. Remote brought some bandages for them to put on their hands after they were done with the oath. Remote gave them a tissue and bandages. They all wiped their hands and put the bandages on.

"Liy, I hate you," Tree stared at Liy.

Tree soon smiled and everyone else did too. Soon, everyone was laughing as Liy and Tree laughed at each other.

"Welp, see ya later," Tree smiled. He walked away and got in his car. He drove away and everyone watched as he did so.

Following Tree, Pen decided to leave too. He hugged everyone and patted Lightning on the back before leaving. He followed in Tree's footsteps and took his own car home.

One by one, the members started leaving. Now, it was just Remote and Liy together on the stumps of wood.

"What are you planning to do this year?" Liy asked.

"I'm planning to move to New Orleans," Remote commented, deadpan.

"When are you moving?" Liy asked with a frown on her face.

"Tomorrow morning," Remote frowned too.

Liy became even sadder. "How long will you be gone for?"

"I don't know yet. It depends if I like it there," Remote frowned deeper.

The two stared at each other for a couple of seconds before Liy spoke up again.

"If you decide to move, will we always stay in touch?"

"Yes. I'll always remember you," A tear flowed down Remote's face.

The two girls stood up and kissed each other. Remote basked in the feeling of her girlfriend. Although she'd be away from Liy for who knows how long, she would always remember her and she would cement herself as a key part of her life. They released and Remote put a hand on Liy's face.

"Well, is this the end?" Remote asked.

"I guess so. I'll see you around, Remote," Liy smiled.

Remote smiled back and walked to her car. She opened the door and drove off. All Liy did was stare at the back of the car and shed tears, watching Remote drive off into the distance...

Thank Yous + Final Comments

Hello everyone. I wanted to take some time to thank all of you guys for reading this. Even you. Yeah, you! The one reading this right now! Thank you so so much for reading to the end of this story. It's been a long journey, and I'm proud to end this book with such happiness.

All my viewers, you guys have made me feel joy I didn't think was ever possible. Ever since I started writing and being on Wattpad regularly, I lost the depression I had months ago. I can't put into words how thankful I am for everyone reading.

I know this page sounds corny asf, but I'm serious. Thank you all for viewing. You're all amazing and I hope you guys know that. Before leaving, I want to thank everyone who has left a comment and brightened my day. :D

Thank you...

@remotelovesbatteries ⭐MY FIRST FOLLOWER TYSM!

@cloverrRy ⭐MY FIRST COMMENTER TYSM!

@NovaTheBfdiFan ⭐ABSOLUTELY EPIC PERSON

@Nevergonnabreathe ⭐CHECK OUT THEIR AU! IT'S SO MUCH BETTER THAN THIS LOL https://www.wattpad.com/1392116242-together-at-the-edge-of-a-universe-prologue-alone

@Souuuuuuuuuuuuuuusy ⭐THEIR OBJECT SHOW IS UNDERRATED ASF. CHECK IT OUT ASAP https://www.wattpad.com/1403652848-painful-un-named-showdown-the-start-episode-0-this

Also thank you to everyone else who commented even once...

@Quinnlolll

@CloverTheHuman

@Bfdilover101

@TaterHater_NotReally

@PotatoShrimpOwO

@VanillaLilySwiss

@ttoucann

@MSYJ-1111111111

@Fufu6006

@Sonny8133

If you think I'm crazy for thanking every commenter individually, you're right. I am crazy. To be fair though, if you stay up until 2 am, anyone's bound to go crazy haha. Still, even if you're viewing this later and I haven't mentioned you, I thank you very much for reading. Not many will probably view this, so if you're here, have a damn good day/night! :)

Fears 2 - Revenge: Publishing 01/01/24

Is this the part where I'm supposed to leave? Oh, okay, bye!

COVER REDESIGN!

This one's slightly better than the last. I thought the old one looked like absolute shit haha. This should satisfy you all! :)